THE DICKENSIAN

WALTER DEXTER MEMORIAL NUMBER

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WHEN FOUND—

Our Forty Years. This number of *The Dickensian* marks a milestone in its history. It closes its fortieth volume, and it marks the greatly lamented death of its second Editor. B. W. Matz conducted this journal for 21 years (1905-1925) and Walter Dexter for 19 years (1925-1944). In each case the Editor has died in harness—Matz very soon after the June issue was printed and Dexter while the June issue was being printed. Matz was a little over 60 and Dexter nearly 67.

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Walter Dexter. The esteem and affection in which Walter Dexter was held both inside and outside the Dickens Fellowship has been abundantly shown by the number and the warmth of the tributes that have been received. Many appear in the following pages, but it has been found impossible to include them all. That affection is the deeper for the knowledge that he laboured so ungrudgingly. Readers are confidently referred to the appeal by the President for the Dexter Memorial Fund appearing on p. 185. It is hoped that all Branches, as well as individual members, will contribute. Executives will doubtlessly be arranging functions and planning other methods of raising funds for the purpose.

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Vale. Mr. Dexter's funeral took place on May 20th at Golders Green. The chapel was quite filled; besides members of his own family there were present many of his oldest friends, his business partners, representatives from the Dickens Fellowship, the City of London, the Savage Club and the Borough of Southgate, which supplied a guard of honour of A.R.P. Wardens to receive the cortège on its arrival at the Crematorium. In accordance with Mrs. Dexter's wishes, the profusion of cut flowers was distributed to hospitals, and a subscription was sent in memory of Mr. Dexter to the Lord Mayor Treloar's Cripples Hospital at Alton.

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Our Future. Walter Dexter was deeply interested in the future of this magazine and frequently discussed it, often with the present writer. Every endeavour will be made to maintain the high standard that he set, and the aid of Branches is sought to maintain the circulation. As a further and practical tribute to his memory, could not every branch whose subscription does not include the magazine set themselves the target of obtaining at least six new subscribers?

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Public Libraries. Is *The Dickensian* to be seen in your City Library? If it is not, could not your Committee officially approach the Chief Librarian with a view to repairing the omission? We should be happy to assist with specimen copies or in any other way.

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Mrs. Dexter. Readers will be glad to see the latest available portrait of the late Editor accompanied by his wife. Mrs. Dexter was the constant companion of her husband on his journeys in

search of materials for his contributions to Dickensian topography, and has countless friends in London and the provinces. The photograph which appears on page 173 was taken in their own garden two or three years ago.

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From Boston, U.S.A. Our admirable contemporary, "The Chigwell Chronicle," the organ of the Boston, Mass., Branch, published a Dexter Memorial Number in June. It contains an early photograph of the late Editor, a tribute from the President, Mr. E. F. Payne, Mr. F. W. C. Hersey, and our own Mr. Miller, in addition to extracts from letters written by Mr. Dexter himself to his Boston friends.

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June 9th at the Abbey. To mark the 74th anniversary of the death of Charles Dickens, a representative group of members met in Poet's Corner, Westminster Abbey, on June 9th to lay a chaplet of laurel and scarlet geraniums on the grave. The little ceremony was performed for The Dickens Fellowship by Canon Fox, who was accompanied by Canon Marriott. In listening to the eloquent tribute paid to the novelist by Canon Fox, the members were joined by a group of American soldiers who happened to be visiting the Abbey. Anglo-American understanding cannot but benefit by such acts of homage to a common heritage.

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Rochester. On the following Sunday a similar ceremony was performed in Rochester Cathedral, where the Dean (the Very Rev. T. Crick) gave an address, and Mrs. Crick laid a wreath by the Dickens Memorial Tablet.

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To France ! The Preston Branch has heard from a member in Normandy, Trooper George White, that "I got my *Dickensian* just before leaving England, and in between slight bouts of sea-sickness, I read it on the way over." Good luck to you, Trooper White !

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Dickens on the other side. Mrs. Beatrice Warde, writing in "John o' London's Weekly" on May 19th, says that her mother, Mrs. May Lamberton Becker, authoress of "Introducing Charles Dickens," asked in the "New York Herald-Tribune," of which paper she edits the "Readers' Guide," "From what books has your idea of England been obtained ?" Altogether 579 titles were given, an author given as complete counting as one title. The eight authors who were given thus "complete" were: Dickens, Jane Austen, W. W. Jacobs, Constance Holmes, Mary Webb, Saki, E. Nesbit and Angela Thirkell. Other names, of course, were given, but these were the only authors whose whole output was included.

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A Loss. The list of our Vice-Presidents is the poorer by the death at the ripe age of eighty-eight of G. B. Burgin, who passed away after a long illness in June. Burgin was thirty-eight years of age when he published his first book, "His Lordship and Others." Previously he had travelled with Baker Pasha as Secretary of the Reform Commission in Armenia, and many of his novels are full of Eastern scenery and colour. He also lived for a few years in Canada, from whence he obtained inspiration. Burgin was associated with J. K. Jerome and Robert Barr in "The Idler" (1892-1897), and was Secretary of the Authors Club from 1905 to 1908. He was a prolific writer and produced two or three novels a year with great regularity. His best known book is "The Shutters of Silence," which was reprinted

many times. All his books are marked with the simplicity and quiet charm that were characteristic of the man himself. He was a welcome after-dinner speaker with a great fund of anecdote, and will be greatly missed by a large circle of friends in the literary and journalistic world.

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" ' Sir,' said . . ."

The Notes on Dickens's novels that have been appearing during the past two years have met with very general approval from readers. Notes on *Edwin Drood* appear in the present number, and other series are in preparation. Mr. T. W. Hill writes to tell me that he has found in Boswell's "Life of Johnson," under date April 3rd, 1773, this dictum by the great lexicographer: "All works which describe manners, require notes in sixty or seventy years, or less."

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A Pickwickian Inn.

It is good news that the Pomfret Arms at Towcester is to have restored to it the name of the Saracen's Head, the name it bears in *The Pickwick Papers*.

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Canada once more.

Just too late for acknowledgement in our last issue there arrived from the Toronto Branch a further unsolicited £85 for the benefit of British child victims of the war. £50 is contributed by the Branch itself and £35 by the Boz Club. Our most grateful thanks, Toronto. In these days of the flying bomb, it will be put to good use indeed.

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On the Battlefield.

"The Times" correspondent, reporting from the Minsk front on July 2nd, writes that amongst the scattered belongings of a defeated German tank crew he picked up a copy of a German translation of *A Christmas Carol*.

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An unpublished Dickens manuscript.

A rare opportunity presents itself in the announcement by Messrs. Chas. J. Sawyer & Co. of the sale of an important unpublished manuscript by Dickens entitled "Emigration." Particulars appear in our advertisement pages. Running to seven pages, it goes into the question of Australian emigration in considerable detail. Dickens's interest in the subject is well known; two of his sons he started upon Australian careers and so impressed was he by the opportunities that that country offered that he made even Wilkins Micawber succeed there.

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A notable gift.

The Dickens House has recently received from the All Union Lenin Library of Moscow a collection of some of the novels in Russian: *Dombey and Son*, 1936, *David Copperfield*, 1939, both with the Phiz illustrations, *Great Expectations*, with charming original woodcuts, *Hard Times*, 1933, *Oliver Twist*, 1937, and *Little Dorrit*, 1937. The Dickens House before the war was presented with the fine *Pickwick* in three volumes published by the Moscow Accademia, 1933, newly illustrated, one volume of the three being entirely devoted to notes.

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The Editor's Thanks.

I cannot close these notes without offering my sincere thanks to my predecessor's oldest friend and valued contributor, Mr. T. W. Hill. In the preparation of this, my first number, produced in the shadow of our great loss and under conditions of enemy bombardment, his generous aid has indeed been a tower of strength.

LESLIE C. STAPLES.

WALTER DEXTER

A RECORD AND A TRIBUTE

By T. W. HILL

WELL done, thou good and faithful servant.

In the parable of the talents, this phrase was the reward of the man who, well-endowed with talents, had doubled his endowment: it can also be applied with justice to Walter Dexter, who, well-endowed with talents and initiative, achieved success in business and accomplished great things for the author to whom he was devoted, for the Dickens Fellowship, and for the Dickens House.

In the ranks of Dickens-lovers Dexter's death leaves a well-nigh unbridgeable gap; his position was unrivalled and his knowledge unique, whether by the extent of his learning in his special subject, the wideness of his sympathies, or the generosity of his disposition. He had the happy knack, not vouchsafed to everyone, of inspiring others with his own amazing vitality—it was positively infectious. Those of us who were so privileged as to be brought into close contact with him recall many occasions when, thanks to his vivid, accurate and retentive memory, he saved us the necessity of much research.

Readers of *The Dickensian*, and the large circle of friends who have been bereaved by his passing may like to have some account of the man behind the magazine. He was born on June 7th, 1877, in London, where he lived all his life. On leaving St. Olave's Grammar School, he entered the business house where his father already held a responsible position, but after a very few years his energy and enterprise led him to become a general produce merchant and shipper with interests in many foreign countries. The concentration and effort this involved was not enough to absorb all his vigour, and believing in the motto, "work hard and play hard," he devoted his leisure to Dickens. He was especially interested in topography, and his love of the open air took him first all over London and then throughout England seeking to identify towns, villages, houses and other scenes associated with the life and writings of his favourite author.

He has recounted in these pages* the circumstances leading to his becoming a member of the Dickens Fellowship in 1905, but he has been reticent as to the many benefits his enthusiasm conferred on the society. His personal qualities soon brought him to the front, for within two years he had joined the Council, and a year later he became Hon. Treasurer, an office he held with great success for seventeen years: he gave unremitting and close attention to the duties of his office and steered the Fellowship into a thoroughly sound financial position. As Treasurer of the Dickens Fellowship Dexter was also Treasurer of *The Dickensian*, and in addition was an *ex-officio* Trustee of the Dickens House, whose finances are by custom entrusted to his care.

Dexter relinquished his treasurership only to become Editor of *The Dickensian* in 1925. His consistent policy as Editor was the retention by the magazine of the high and authoritative position it had secured under Matz's guidance, and the increase of its influence not only among Dickens-lovers but also among the wider public of general readers. He regarded it as the proper depository for all matters of interest where they would be readily accessible for permanent reference. His own contributions to such knowledge included complete records of Dickens's appearances as an actor, and all the series of his public Readings which had never been properly catalogued: political cartoons

* See *The Dickensian*, 1944, p. 25.

inspired by Dickens's books, for which he searched all through the files of "Punch"; the reproduction of previously unpublished letters of Dickens; tributes to Dickens's "Immortal Memory" by prominent public speakers, etc., etc. A feature of Dexter's editorship was his profuse use of illustrations in the collection of which he was indefatigable.

Dexter's enthusiasms included a love of the drama. Soon after he joined the Fellowship he became the first Hon. Secretary of the Dickens Fellowship Dramatic Society, formed in 1905 under the presidency of J. L. Toole. For this position he was particularly well suited as he had often acted in the school plays at St. Olave's, and he was a capital "make-up"—he entirely disappeared in the character he was impersonating. His dramatic instinct inspired him to adapt Dickens's novels for the stage either alone or in collaboration with others as keen as himself. All of these plays were presented by the Dramatic Society, and some of them achieved a wider celebrity by being performed at London theatres and in the provinces. For himself Dexter constructed a toy-theatre in which he produced not only the old Victorian favourites but also small plays written by himself for the amusement of his children and his friends. When the cinema arose to prominence Dexter was constantly consulted by producers to ensure the correctness of the scenarios and the Dickensian details. The present writer sometimes accompanied him on his visits to the studios or to the private views.

Dexter was an entertaining lecturer on his favourite subject and was in constant demand by the Fellowship and its provincial Branches: he never refused an invitation to lecture unless he actually had some more important call upon his much occupied time. His lectures were often illustrated by his own photographs. As a guide to London Dexter was very often called upon to take visitors from the Empire and America round the Metropolis to see places of Dickensian interest, and he never tired of entertaining them in other ways. He found time to pay official visits to branches all over England, and shewed a keen concern in every development in connection with the hobby of his life. It was largely owing to his initiative that the George Inn in the Borough High Street was saved for the nation in 1937.

Dexter never indulged in field sports, although he was a lover of open-air exercise. He was a good walker, a cyclist, and in later years became an ardent motorist, and accompanied by his camera explored practically the whole of Great Britain on topographical and archæological journeys. His urge for wanting to share his pleasures prompted him, while still in his teens to publish for other people's amusement, illustrated articles in magazines and periodicals on the results of his journeyings.

He really loved travel and often bemoaned the fact that the calls of business prevented him from enjoying more opportunities for visiting other lands than England; nevertheless he often visited many parts of the Continent and managed to find time to cross the Atlantic. While yet a lad he taught himself elementary bookbinding, as many of the volumes on the shelves of his library shew, and one of his earliest contributions to the "Boys' Own Paper" was an article instructing other boys in the art and mystery. This article he mounted and bound from his own directions, and the resulting little booklet forms one of Mrs. Dexter's most treasured possessions.

And yet these multifarious occupations that would be enough, and more than enough, to absorb all the leisure of a man immersed in business, did not tax all his energies. He was an omnivorous reader and an ardent collector of "first editions." He had complete sets in first editions of the works of Arnold Bennett, W. J. Locke, H. G. Wells,

R. L. Stevenson and other favourite authors, in addition to his Dickens library consisting of many first and early editions, bound, in parts as published, or in serial form.

Dexter had other enthusiasms: his ebullient activity found an outlet in children's games and toys, many of his own contriving, and he could keep a children's party amused and happy for hours. He had a fascination for small children, due probably to his own boyish gaiety (for in many respects he never grew up), and during his walks he was often surrounded by "adopted nephews and nieces"—he was Uncle Walter to them all—to whose high-pitched chatter he listened with delight, entering fully into all their little joys and tribulations.

He spent many hours in the British Museum and other libraries adding to his already extensive knowledge of theatrical history and old play-bills and on topographical research, especially if he were trying to help someone else. Another topic that claimed his attention was the history of cheap magazine literature for which he collected assiduously. As a young man he had, to amuse himself, purchased the first number of every magazine he knew of, and this collection, added to from time to time, formed the basis of an interesting search for boys' and girls' periodicals, the result of which furnished a very readable article in "Chambers's Journal."

At another time he had thoughts of publishing his extensive knowledge of the lost theatres and music-halls of London, and, so earnest was he in his quest that Brookes Cross wrote to him: "What a dynamo you are! No sooner do you get an idea than off you go at full speed dragging me breathlessly in your wake!" And Brookes Cross was the son of an actor and an acknowledged authority on theatrical history.

When cross-words, after their first novelty, became a regular feature in the daily and weekly press, Dexter compiled dozens on Dickensian lines, and his puzzles appeared in "The Times," "The Listener," and elsewhere, as well as in his own magazine, where they were credited to "Walter Thomas," indicating that the present writer had been invited to join in the game. In this connection it may be stated that Dexter invented the *noms de guerre* of T. Kent Brumleigh and Kentley Bromhill for a contributor who lives at Bromley, Kent; and that C. T. Roade was Dexter's own method of disguising his identity when he had an office in City Road, London; and when he went to live at Lakenheath he naturally became L. A. Kennethe. The invention of cross-words lightened for Dexter many a night vigil at the Warden's Post when he was on duty, as he had joined the Civil Defence organisation as an A.R.P. Warden soon after its formation in 1938.

At the time of his death he was amassing material for an article on the changing fashions in the binding of cheap literature, and had collected specimens, although the series is left incomplete, of volumes priced at about 2/- each, from the grey paper sides and white labels of the eighteen-twenties to the "yellow-backs" of the eighteen-eighties.

His outstanding position on all matters connected with Dickens brought Dexter the invitation to become one of the joint editors of the great Nonesuch Edition of Dickens's Works, the others being Arthur Waugh, Sir Hugh Walpole and Thomas Hatton, and he was solely responsible for the monumental undertaking of preparing the three volumes of Dickens's letters included in that edition—the most complete collection ever made. It runs to over 2,500 pages. He has left behind nearly enough material for a fourth volume of Dickens's letters.

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The pages of *The Dickensian* seem the right and proper place to preserve the complete list of Dexter's published works:

The London of Dickens. 1923.
The Kent of Dickens. 1924.
Homes and Haunts of Charles Dickens (written for the Southern Railway). 1924.
The England of Dickens. 1925.
Mr. Pickwick's Pilgrimages. 1936.
Dickens: the Story of his Life [written for the Dickens Fellowship]. 1927. Second edition, 1937.
Some Rogues and Vagabonds of Dickens. 1927.
Unpublished Letters of Charles Dickens to Mark Lemon; edited by Walter Dexter. 1927.
Dickens to his oldest Friend, Thomas Beard; edited by Walter Dexter. 1932.
Days in Dickens Land. 1933.
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Dickens: His Letters to Her; edited by Walter Dexter. 1935.
The Love Romance of Charles Dickens. [Letters to Maria Beadnell.] Edited by Walter Dexter. 1936.
The Origin of Pickwick [with J. W. T. Ley]. 1936.
Mr. Wardle (in "A Pickwick Portrait Gallery"). 1936.
Letters of Charles Dickens: 3 vols, in the Nonesuch edition of Dickens's Works. 1938.

The following bear upon the title-page: "50 copies only: privately printed by Walter Dexter for his friends."

Dickens to his oldest Friend, Thomas Beard. 1931.
Dickens's First Publisher: Correspondence with John Macrone. 1931.
———— [including some additional letters]. 1934.
Dickens's correspondence with John Hullah. 1933.
Dickens's correspondence with John Leech. 1935.
A Dinner at Poplar Walk. [A photographic reproduction of some pages of the "Monthly Magazine" for 1833 containing Dickens's earliest article]. 1933.

Hundreds of articles in reviews, magazines, periodicals and newspapers on Dickensian, topographical, and literary subjects. 1897-1944.

Numerous prefaces and introductions to other people's books and pamphlets on Dickens subjects, written with the desire to assist in any way the efforts of the authors to promote the study of Dickens lore.

Dexter's latest published article was printed, posthumously, in "John o' London's Weekly" on June 2nd, 1944, on "Some Curious Old Periodicals" and bore this editorial note: "Mr. Walter Dexter, (sometime) treasurer of the Dickens Fellowship, editor of 'The Dickensian,' author of books on Dickens, and a good friend of 'John o' London's Weekly' in our search for information, sent us the following article shortly before his recent death."

The manuscripts of the following plays were among Dexter's papers:

"The House of Dombey," by Florence Teignmouth Shore and Walter Dexter.
"Dolly Varden," by Walter Dexter.
"Oliver Twist," by Walter Dexter and Frederick Harry.
"David Copperfield," by Walter Frederick Evelyn.*
"Barnaby Rudge," by Walter Frederick Evelyn.
"Old Curiosity Shop," by Walter Frederick Evelyn.
"Pickwick," by Walter Frederick Evelyn. [The songs by Walter Dexter.]
"Great Expectations," by Walter Dexter. [MS. lost.]

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* Pseudonym of Walter Dexter, Frederick T. Harry and A. Evelyn Brookes Cross.

Dexter was one of a large and united family brought up in the happiest domestic surroundings, and in his own home-life he was never happier than when surrounded by his wife and children, to all of whom he was devoted, and for all of whom he was incomparable. An Englishman's house is his castle, but at Dexter's Castle the drawbridge was always down and the gate always open to extend to friends and visitors a truly English welcome and hospitality. His generosity was without limit, and no one will ever know the extent of his charity. Like all great enthusiasts he was a man of strong feelings: he enjoyed the thrust and parry of controversy, but he retained the friendship of his severest critics, and he never nursed a grievance or harboured an unkind thought. His most marked quality was his loyalty both to his friends and to his ideals. Deep sincerity, directness of expression, industry, simplicity of mind, loathing of ostentation, hatred of wrong by word or deed, tender sympathy with the poor and needy and "all that are desolate and oppressed," and generosity of thought, made up the character of this true English gentleman.

SOME FURTHER TRIBUTES

By HENRY CHARLES DICKENS, O.B.E.,
Vice-President of The Dickens Fellowship.

THE Fellowship has suffered a cruel loss. *The Dickensian* has lost its chief inspiration, and all those who knew Walter Dexter personally grieve for a friend who can never be replaced.

To the many tributes which have been paid to his memory, it is but right that one should be added by a bearer of the name which he so loved and honoured. A very large part of his life was spent in devotion to the man who made that name world-famous, and in giving the people of a whole generation a deeper appreciation of Charles Dickens's work. Dexter's was no mere indiscriminate adulation; it was his penetrating literary judgement and comment which gave us all a truer understanding of the Works and their author's life whenever he wrote or spoke of them. Because he loved Dickens, thousands of people have loved him better too. He was the perfect disciple.

He probably knew more about Dickens than any of his contemporaries. I know myself that whenever I was at a loss to answer a query or locate a reference, I always referred it unhesitatingly to Walter Dexter, and he never failed. One of his greatest services was in keeping Dickens's reputation from being besmirched by those scurrilous aspersions which the memories of the great seem always to invite from lesser men.

We are all Dickensians, and as such, grieve that the work of Dexter's life has come to an end. To those of us who were lucky enough to have his friendship and to know him for what he was—affectionate, genial and cultured, kindly to all and steadfast in the integrity of his character—the personal loss is very great indeed.

The best tribute that the members of the Fellowship of this and future ages can pay to the memory of Walter Dexter is to continue, as best we may, the work which he so loved. May *The Dickensian* flourish, that between its green covers the memory of its editor for nineteen years may long be kept green.

By BERNARD DARWIN, C.B.E.,
Vice-President of The Dickens Fellowship.

I WISH I could pay any worthy tribute to Mr. Dexter, but I am sure I cannot because I did not know him well enough. Everybody who

ever met him must have felt attracted towards him. Everybody who took an interest in Dickens must have admired not merely his learning but all his sturdy and selfless work for the cause. To have brought out as he did number after number of *The Dickensian* and made them all so varied, readable and interesting was, granted the enthusiasm and help of his contributors, a truly remarkable achievement. It seemed

Mr. and Mrs. Walter Dexter

that not the most trivial reference to Dickens in any contemporary book or newspaper could escape that far-ranging eye. His knowledge whether of the books or the letters or the life was clearly profound, and it would indeed have been a rash man who should try a fall with him in any test of memory or on any recondite point of quotation. Other people might have a notion where to look for their Dickens; he knew his Dickens.

These are, as I am conscious, trite and obvious comments, but, as I said, I had too seldom the pleasure of meeting him. To do so was always a real pleasure. There seemed to me something Pickwickian

about him—a smiling courtesy, an eager friendliness, even an agreeable touch of rotundity reminiscent of that great man. I remember particularly one such meeting. I wanted to consult certain first editions in their green covers which he possessed, and he most kindly put them at my disposal. They were naturally far too precious to leave his care, and so I spent an afternoon poring over them at his office. That which added to the pleasure of it was the fact ("unless," as Mr. Peggotty would say, "my wits is gone a bahd's neezing") that his office was close to Windsor Terrace, City Road, once the abode of Mr. Micawber. Whether he chose the situation on that account I do not know, but the collocation was delightful. How great is the gap he has left only those can tell who worked constantly and intimately with him, but one may feel confident that the torch which he has handed on will be worthily sustained.

By BRANSBY WILLIAMS,
Vice-President of The Dickens Fellowship

CHARLES DICKENS passed away exactly seventy-four years ago to-day. He left an "Empty Chair." I am looking at Sir Luke Fildes's picture of it!

To-day we all mourn the loss of "Our Mutual Friend," Walter Dexter.

So we have yet another "vacant chair"—at our meetings, dinners, and in *The Dickensian* office.

He has meant so much to the Fellowship. His force, and if we may say so—"Ginger"—kept many things going. He has piloted *The Dickensian* through a stormy period, these last few years of horror, and has shared our anxiety, the safety of the House in Doughty Street.

I have known him for forty years. In 1905 he was the guiding spirit of the Dickens Dramatic Company. He persuaded me to join them and produce "Oliver Twist," and played "Grimwig" and I "Fagin." Then followed my appearance as "Barnaby Rudge." Later he was part author of "David Copperfield," which I toured. Those were happy days!

Recently we lunched together and he chaffed me at my youth! We talked of the future and of the great past.

He took the vacant chair left by that very dear man, B. W. Matz.

In those days J. Cuming Walters, J. W. T. Ley, Matz, Dexter and I used to meet, and he was always the force that pushed us onward.

So my Dickensian friends. Walter Dexter has gone to join a Higher Fellowship, where he may meet J. Cuming Walters, J. W. T. Ley and B. W. Matz. Who knows he may meet that great master—he has so much admired and worked for—Charles Dickens. May his work go on, and we keep "His memory green."

By RALPH STRAUS,
Vice-President of The Dickens Fellowship.

"IT is not an ordinary triumph to do such justice to the memory of such a man." It was in these words that Dickens in 1866 congratulated B. W. Procter on his biography of Charles Lamb, and it seems to me that few may more fitly be applied to the man who so ably and over a period of so many years did justice to the memory of their writer.

Walter Dexter's, indeed, was no ordinary triumph. He made his own niche, and, if I may be allowed the epithet in this connection, it

was an authoritative niche. I am all the happier, too, to be permitted to pay my tribute to his memory because in the days before I had the privilege of knowing him and seeing his methods of work I held a quite mistaken notion about the man himself. The dividing line between the enthusiast and the fanatic can be thin, so thin that it is not always immediately apparent, and I will confess that in the old days I was ignorant enough to put Dexter amongst the fanatics. I had come to the belief, though goodness knows how, that the Editor of *The Dickensian* was amongst those who put Dickens on the sky-scraping pedestal of a demigod. I had not known him personally for more than a few hours before I was seeing him for what he was: the devoted but always judicious admirer of the very human Boz. In my ignorance I had looked upon him as the merest "door-mat"; I found a most careful and indefatigable student ever eager to sift the truth from the mass of legend which gathers about almost every great figure, a cheery optimist always delighted to put his encyclopaedic knowledge of Dickensiana at the disposal of those engaged in honest biographical research, and, above all, a coolly balanced critic who possessed something of Dickens's own brand of humour, and certainly his contempt for mere cant. As time passed on, too, and almost every aspect of Dickens's life was discussed between us, I never found reason to alter that opinion. Here was not only the right type of enthusiast, but also the kindest of friends, and I took no little pride in being able to help him to some small extent while he was preparing his edition of Dickens's letters for the Nonesuch Press.

Now he is gone: that burly, comfortable figure whose very presence tended to put you into the best of good tempers, and his loss will be felt far outside his own circle of the Fellowship. For although he never called himself a professional writer, his published works must have their honoured place in any library of books specialising in nineteenth century letters. His place, too, will be hard, if not impossible, to fill. Many there may be who would be eager to carry on that great labour of love to which he gave so much of his leisure time: few, I am afraid will possess all the delectable qualifications which he was able to bring to the task.

By DAME UNA POPE-HENNESSY, D.B.E.

Though I have only known Mr. Walter Dexter for two years I feel his death as a great personal loss. As an investigator in the Dickens world I have received invaluable help and encouragement from him. Not only had he every detail of Dickens's life at his finger tips, but he knew every character in the novels and their originals in life. In conversations, lasting sometimes three hours at a time, we have together thrashed out problems connected with Dickens's career to which Mr. Dexter alone had the key. It was only two days before his death that he finished reading the last typescript chapters of my forthcoming book on Charles Dickens, and among the last letters he wrote must have been the one in which he recorded his admiration and praise of my work. For many months past he has lent me books, allowed me to read unpublished letters, and good-humouredly submitted to my numerous queries and surmises. I can truthfully say that had it not been for his open-mindedness and his willingness to discuss points as they arose, I never could have hoped to write either a comprehensive or an entirely truthful biography of Charles Dickens. My gratitude to this generous, great-hearted man is profound.

By PATRICK BRAYBROOKE

Author of " A Child's Charles Dickens," etc.

It is a mere platitude to say that Walter Dexter knew everything about Charles Dickens, his books, his characters, his ideals, his hopes and, yes—perhaps his fears. But a platitude is very often the expression of a truism, and it most certainly is, in the one I have just written.

But to say that Walter Dexter knew all about Charles Dickens is not to tell the whole story. He was literally in himself an embodiment of the great Victorian novelist. When Dexter dined (as I know from a happy experience) he dispensed without any kind of patronage or embarrassment a Dickensian hospitality. If Dexter took you round on a Dickens pilgrimage, whether in London, or further afield (and how many thousands did he take round) you felt that just round that very next corner you must find Squeers getting a hiding from Nicholas, Fagin about to leave for the condemned cell, or Mr. Pickwick roguishly pondering on the proper thing to do for a middle-aged man.

Dickens was a passion with Dexter, but it was never an unruly passion. He could be critical, as can be seen in his books. He was never by any chance just a literary man with an absorbing delight in following a great literary hero. He was a keen man of business, and he was " thorough " in everything he did. His editing of *The Dickensian* was a long and brilliant editorial success. There was always something new about Dickens in almost every issue. He was indeed in his own way a great editor.

I had not seen Dexter for some time prior to his death. But I saw the announcement in the cold unsentimental print of a London Evening Newspaper, and as I read the somewhat terse paragraph which said he was Editor of *The Dickensian* and had died in London, I felt how inadequate so often is the printed word, to convey anything more than a passing news item.

The long winding English road, white away into the far distance, still holds for us, at the end, an Inn, and at this Inn we will drink out of the huge flagon, which Chesterton said, would be reserved for lovers of Charles Dickens.

For all of us the long white road leads to the inevitable end, as it did for Dickens, for Chesterton, and now, alas, for Walter Dexter.

But if one day we may all meet, and if not drink, at least watch others drink, out of that great flagon, I am sure we shall listen to a toast.

And the toast will be given by Walter Dexter ; and I am certain that it will be in the words of Tiny Tim :

" God bless us, every one."

By FRANK J. STAFF

1905 to 1944—39 years of friendship, and I have delayed submitting these few lines because I wished to test my memory as to the disagreements and quarrels that must inevitably disturb so long an intimacy. I cannot remember one instance of discord or estrangement. Argument ? Yes. Walter Dexter was always one for an argument. We could both argue and usually concluded with a laugh.

I had the privilege of a close acquaintance with his mother, brothers and sister, and after his marriage, the honour of the friendship of his wife and children ; therefore I am in a position to speak of his private life and character with conviction.

A staunch friend and one who will be greatly missed by all. An advocate for justice and fair play ; and an enemy to the petty and narrow-minded individual.

The study of Shakespeare has been of value to me during my lifetime. but I call to mind one couplet with which I have never wholly agreed, I quote from Julius Cæsar:

> "The evil that men do lives after them;
> The good is oft interred in their bones."

That does not apply in scores of instances, and particularly does it not apply in the case of Walter Dexter. I can call to mind no evil that

Walter Dexter as Captain Cuttle
assists the Fat Boy at the Pickwick Centenary Matinée,
the London Palladium, 1936

will live after him, but I and hundreds of others, particularly members of our Fellowship, will ever remember the good he has achieved.

His interest in the Dickens Fellowship began in 1905 and increased as the years passed. His suggestions for the improvement of its position financially and socially appeared revolutionary to the members of the early Councils, and he was at first opposed, and finally applauded when his ideas were proved to be good.

By the untimely death of the first Editor of *The Dickensian*, a deplorable setback to progress seemed apparent, but Walter Dexter took the helm, and through his energy and unselfish labour the success of our magazine continued, and as time went on its popularity and circulation increased.

The Fellowship has lost a true and sincere friend in him, and quoting again, I conclude with:

> "His life was gentle; and the elements so mixed in him, that nature might stand up, and say to all the world
> 'This was a man!'"

By WILLIAM MILLER

THE passing of Walter Dexter came as a great shock to me. The forty years of close friendship had ripened as the years rolled by and its sad termination was indeed an irreparable loss.

Although we were thousands of miles apart we seemed to have been drawn even closer together as his frequent letters, which were full of optimism for the future, testify. I can hardly realise that I have lost this great friend. Indeed, the world has lost a great Dickensian.

In a tribute one cannot avoid reminiscences. We often met in the City at lunch to discuss and compare notes on various subjects. His delight at any new Dickens discovery I had made will not be forgotten, his face beamed with delight when I was able to fill in a gap in an article, or able to loan a picture to illustrate a contribution in *The Dickensian*.

He was at his best when he played the rôle of host. I was his guest on several occasions.

His approval of anything well done was most enthusiastic, such as the occasion of the opening of the Pickwick Exhibition at Doughty Street in 1936, admitting at the same time "that he was a severe critic."

I shall never forget the last time I saw him. He had come to Euston Station to bid my wife and myself Godspeed as we were leaving England for America. His smiling face was quite an inspiration. Little did I dream that this was indeed Farewell. I feel deeply the loss of this splendid friend and colleague.

By FRANK W. C. HERSEY

Formerly Reader in English Literature, Harvard University, U.S.A.

I AM deeply grieved to learn the sad news about Walter Dexter. The friendship which I have been privileged to enjoy extended over many years, and his genial companionship and warm hospitality enriched my annual visits to England. With hearty cordiality he welcomed me into his family circle, where year by year I watched his attractive sons and daughters growing to maturity. This meant so much to a son of New England coming across the seas to the Old Home. He wrote me many letters, always animated by his wit. He cleverly found in Dickens a code to pass the censor; wishing to let me know where his son Michael was stationed with his anti-aircraft battery, he wrote, "Michael is still in the city where Tom Pinch played the organ!"

Walter Dexter was the embodiment of enthusiastic scholarship. His zeal and devotion in enlarging his knowledge of Dickens were unflagging. And the range of that knowledge and the intensive study of detail made him an authority. We made many delightful explora-

tions of London when I was gathering material and pictures for illustrated lectures on Dickens topography. At every turn his vast store of information was revealed. The memory of his generous, gracious personality and his zealous scholarship will be abiding.

As we go to press there arrives, too late unhappily for inclusion, a tribute from Mr. J. K. Thompson, for thirty-two years Secretary of the Philadelphia Branch.

By C. H. GREEN,
Hon. Secretary of The Dickens Fellowship 1920-1925.

It is difficult to refrain from repeating the many appreciative tributes to Walter Dexter, with every one of which I am in full agreement. All who worked with him in connection with The Fellowship and *The Dickensian* are unanimous in praising his sincerity and steadfastness, his determination to bring to a successful conclusion everything he undertook, and his undoubted desire to arrive at a true solution of any problem which confronted him. All this is so apparent in conversation with his numerous friends and Dickensian admirers as to hardly need repetition. One very marked trait in his character, however, which has not I think been sufficiently emphasized was his sincere desire to respect the opinions of others, whether real opponents or merely superficial objectors, coupled with a readiness promptly to acknowledge any mistake he may have made and correct any misunderstanding which had arisen. It was in my opinion this readiness to give credit to others, and even admit a modification of his own conviction, that strengthened his friendships, and made it possible to discuss unreservedly, and even argue, with him points of vital importance. To me personally he always acted as a true friend, ever ready to assist me in furthering the interests of the Fellowship during the period in which I was Hon. Secretary, and supporting me in all the innovations I desired to make. I well recall a particular incident in his association with me when acquiring the Dickens House. He had been requested by the Committee to assist me if necessary, and we were both anxious to acquire the property as speedily as possible not only to meet the expressed desire of Matz, but also in accordance with the wishes of the Committee. I soon discovered, however, that our methods of action differed, and that the forcible method Dexter proposed to adopt was unacceptable to the vendors; therefore, when a favourable opportunity occurred during Dexter's absence on holiday, I did not hesitate to complete the transaction. Dexter naturally felt disappointed at not having taken part in the final stage, but he was nevertheless the first to realise how advisedly I had acted and to compliment me on the successful completion of the transaction. This is not the only incident of the kind I could mention, but it is typical of the generous nature of the man.

Even when he consented to undertake the Editorship of *The Dickensian* he was always ready to acknowledge any assistance given him while mastering the initial difficulties of the "take over." As regards his Editorship of *The Dickensian* there will be many writers eager and more competent than I am to dilate upon this side of his work for the Fellowship. I must, however, pay my tribute to his extensive Dickensian knowledge, both literary and topographical, which was always available and freely given when sought, and to the admittedly high standard of the articles and accuracy of the statements which appeared in the pages of *The Dickensian* during the nineteen years of his Editorship. These will be the lasting tribute to the memory of Walter Dexter, and will substantiate the claim that he was a true disciple of Charles Dickens.

By A. W. EDWARDS,
Hon. Secretary of The Dickens Fellowship, 1925-1936.

As I sit down to write a tribute to our dear departed friend I hardly know where to begin, so many memories of our jaunts and lunches together—our discussions on things of moment—his many acts of kindness and friendliness—his forceful character and magnaminity of spirit—the delightful dinners he gave to the Dickensian Committee on the successful completion of another Volume, and many other things come crowding upon me.

My first personal contact with Walter Dexter was on a Ramble at Brighton during the Conference of 1910, when we discovered we were both Bermondsey boys. In 1911 I was elected to the Council of the Fellowship, and from that time onwards we were associated in its Executive work ; he was then its Treasurer, and his handling of the Finance was marked with distinctive ability. It was due to him that the Fellowship was placed on a sound financial basis by the raising of the annual subscription to 10/6 to include *The Dickensian*.

It was not, however, till 1925, when I became Hon. Secretary and he took over the Editorship of *The Dickensian* on the lamented death of Matz, that we became more closely acquainted. That acquaintance speedily ripened into intimate friendship ; he was ever ready to assist me with advice and counsel, his fertile brain was teeming with ideas that sometimes almost overwhelmed me, but he was always ready to listen to and see the other fellow's point of view, and never resented it when some idea he put forward was turned down by the Council. The notable Pickwick Centenary celebration in 1936, when " The Fellowship made Literary history," was largely due to his initiative. During my years of office, as I have said, our friendship grew into warm intimacy, his generosity was unbounded, and I am the recipient of a number of his books autographed " to my dear friend," and my wife and I on a number of occasions were guests at his hospitable home, invited to meet some distinguished Dickensian whom he and his dear wife were entertaining. His friendliness was also expressed in another way by inviting us to share his car on occasion, notably to attend the Conference at Birmingham, and the coming-of-age celebration of the Cheltenham Branch. Of his many services to the Fellowship I need not enlarge—they are known to all. His pen was ever busy, and I find that from the first issue of *The Dickensian* in 1905 down to the time that the mantle of Editorship fell upon him in 1925, he had contributed to its pages no fewer than 33 articles and letters. His latest articles in the present year, on " The Fellowship in Retrospect," are perhaps the most valuable contributions he has made to its history, and it is to be hoped the final instalments are in hand. During our friendship we exchanged many letters on personal affairs, and in his last letter to me, written on the 13th April, whilst I was in hospital, expressive of his concern and good wishes for my recovery, he gave me a delightful description of his second daughter's marriage, and also a long account of the latest doings in the Dickensian world. In just over a month he had passed on, leaving us to mourn the loss of a faithful friend, and the memory of a forceful character filled with unbounded enthusiasm for the causes he held dear.

We shall treasure his memory, and feel sure that his influence on our beloved Fellowship will be felt for many years to come.

Farewell ! most loyal friend ! R.I.P.

By LEO MASON
Chairman of the Council of The Dickens Fellowship

It was indeed a fortunate day for the newly-founded Dickens Fellowship when the virile young business man with literary leanings joined the

ranks of the newly-founded and somewhat precariously controlled society. His business training and lifelong characteristic of forthrightness soon gained for him commissioned rank, and for over forty years he increasingly devoted his interest and energy in strengthening the fabric, adding to the interest and increasing the prestige of the Fellowship throughout the world. He served in most capacities, finally taking over the Editorship of *The Dickensian*, an office which he carried out with distinction to the day of his death.

A kindly editor, he was ever ready to encourage and help the would-be contributor to the pages of the magazine, some new viewpoint or item of information was always received by him with enthusiasm. I well remember the first time I essayed to send him a little piece of writing on something of which he was apparently unaware, and the friendly enthusiastic message he sent in acknowledgement. It was the beginning of my more intimate friendship with Walter Dexter, for soon afterwards he sent me a copy of one of his own printed works bearing a very friendly greeting and a most cordial invitation to come and spend a week-end at his home. Well do I recall his hearty welcome at Euston Station, the round of sightseeing in Dickens London, the feastings here and the feastings there, and the cordial hospitality of his pleasant home. It was the beginning of a number of visits, each with its own happy memories. With the coming of war his library, the editor's inner sanctum, was voluntarily turned into a Wardens' Post, the interesting library of Dickensiana still lay upon the shelves, but the editor's desk was now given up to sector maps and Civil Defence literature, gas-proof clothing, rubber boots and steel helmets were placed about the room, and Walter Dexter, in his Civil Defence uniform, had another job of work to do. But the Battle of Britain, the bombing of London, the turning out on Alerts at all times of the day and night, the sleeping under the grand piano, the couple of H.E's which fell within hailing distance on either side of his house, all these did not deter him from patiently and carefully compiling the next number of *The Dickensian*, which surely enough came out on the appointed day. He was the editor, the magazine was his charge ; he was determined that it should not fail through lack of energy on his part. The greatest tribute we can pay to the late editor is to see to it that *The Dickensian* is not allowed to fall from its high place, for he made it a vital and integral part of the world-wide fellowship.

The Dickens Fellowship mourns the loss of an eminent and greatly esteemed Dickensian. Those who were happy to be numbered amongst his more intimate friends will remember Walter Dexter with feelings of deep affection. May his soul rest in peace.

By F. R. DEAN

Past President, Manchester Branch of the Dickens Fellowship

To all members of the Dickens Fellowship and to many lovers of Dickens outside the Fellowship the news of the passing of Walter Dexter must have come as a shock, and to many must have brought a sense of personal loss.

In his various capacities, particularly as Editor of *The Dickensian*, he made a host of friends, both at home and overseas. At the annual conferences of the Fellowship (I believe he was absent from only three) his was an outstanding figure, and he will be remembered by delegates for his forthright contributions to the discussions. Always jealous for the prestige of the Fellowship, and especially of *The Dickensian*, he never shirked criticism, but always with the welfare of the Fellowship in view.

He was, perhaps, the greatest living authority on the topography of the Dickens novels, at least four volumes on that branch of Dickensiana

alone standing to his credit. By his patient and untiring research hundreds of hitherto unpublished letters of Charles Dickens were collected, arranged, annotated and indexed, so that when the "Nonesuch Edition" of Dickens was contemplated, he was invited to become one of its four editors and was responsible for the three volumes of Dickens's letters.

As Editor of *The Dickensian* surely he must have taken Dickens himself as his model! Words used in reference to Dickens's editorship of his two magazines* can equally be applied to Dexter: "He liked his writers to feel unfettered," but "varied as the contents of a number might be, and widely apart the writers, a certain individuality of his own was never absent" . . . "He took immense pains . . . he grudged no trouble." Dexter was always alert to find something new about Dickens, his works or his associations, always considering some new angle from which to view his subject and to present it to his readers in an attractive way. It will probably never be known how many of the pages of *The Dickensian* came from his own pen (or typewriter) but he was always generous in giving credit to his collaborators. Meticulous in details, he was always quick to detect an error in date, name or quotation, and how very rarely did he make such a slip himself!

As a correspondent he was tireless. Many times I have had occasion to ask his help on some matter appertaining to Dickens, and though he must often have been busy "making up," reading proofs or doing the hundred and one jobs incidental to the editing of a magazine, he always replied promptly and often at great length. (I remember one letter, written before he took over the Editorship, consisting of four large, closely-written pages discussing an attempt of mine at dramatisation of one of the novels.)

What delightful recollections I have of him—sitting by the fire late into the night chatting over matters Dickensian; sitting in a quiet room at Rylands library turning over the pages of a lovely many-volume edition of Forster, seeking unpublished letters and playbills; taking him to see the Cheeryble Brothers country at Ramsbottom; walking round Dickens London with him as guide; motoring with him through the lanes of Hertfordshire; enjoying his hospitality at the Centenary Dinner at the City Pickwick Club; these are some of the happy memories I cherish.

But perhaps the most attractive side of his life was the domestic side; and I count it a privilege to have been admitted into his family circle and to have experienced the sense of unrestrained comradeship between husband and wife, father and children. The Fellowship was a paramount interest to him, but never were its affairs allowed to interfere with a family engagement. All Walter Dexter's friends—and I am proud to count myself one—will join in sincere sympathy with his wife and family.

By J. COOPER SANDS,

President of the Nottingham Branch of the Dickens Fellowship.

It is with a sad heart I pen this small tribute to a great Dickensian.

During the last few years other Dickensians belonging to that "inner circle" known as Headquarters have passed from our ken for a while, men whom we could ill spare, and whom we looked upon with affection. To the Fellowship their loss was severe, but in the swift passing of Walter Dexter its loss is indeed grievous.

It has been my privilege to have known him for upwards of twenty years. From my place in the "outer circle" of the Provinces I have

* Forster's "Life" (Ley's edition), pp. 822-3.

had a clear vision of the principal actors on the central stage, among whom Walter Dexter moved as the dominant figure.

His was a great presence, and in his wide knowledge of Dickensian lore he was supreme.

Possessing a strong and cheery personality, his eager spirit impressed itself on all who came under its influence, and whatever he undertook was well and truly done. In character, upright and true, he "couldn't abear a meanness." I ever found him a staunch friend, though our opportunities of indulging that friendship were, unfortunately for me, far too few.

His gifts were many and varied. His literary work showed great facility of expression and depth of research; while on the Council his practical mind, sound judgement and forceful temperament, were outstanding.

In his capacity as Editor of *The Dickensian* for nineteen years he reached his "high spot." To him this work was a labour of love, and he spared neither time or energy in his efforts to lift this periodical to a standard that would make it the great Bond of our Fellowship. In doing this he had to overcome much apathy, while, later, war restrictions cramped its pages. But success was his, for I do not believe there exists to-day any other magazine devoted solely to the memory of an author long dead, which has attained to such prestige.

What the Fellowship will do, lacking his knowledge, influence, and energy, I can scarcely dare to think. We can only pray that the mantle of Elijah may fall on the shoulders of an Elisha, endowed with a like spirit, and the memory of Walter Dexter remain green in our hearts, inspiring those who remain to carry on his work. So that:

"He, being dead, yet speaketh."

By T. STURGE COTTERELL, J.P.

President of the Bath Branch

The passing of Walter Dexter has removed from the pioneers of the Dickens Fellowship a personality well known to members of the branches in the West of England.

We looked upon him as an authority, whose judgement on almost everything connected with the life and writings of Charles Dickens could not be questioned.

It seemed as if the mantle of John Forster, the eminent editor of "The Examiner" and biographer of Dickens, had fallen on Walter Dexter, and in many respects his knowledge was far superior to Forster's. In *The Dickensian* he forged a link between headquarters in London and with the branches as honorary Editor, corrected our errors, and did more than anyone to establish the publication as a stimulus to Dickens readers, known and acknowledged throughout the literary world.

No yearly Conference was complete without his presence, and those held in the West received from him help and advice on every occasion.

We shall miss his genial presence from our gatherings, and remember with pleasure his constant visits to the West over a period of forty years.

The Home Service Bulletins of the B.B.C., at 7 a.m. and 8 a.m. on May 17th, included the following:—Mr. Walter Dexter, Honorary Editor of *The Dickensian*, died in London yesterday at the age of sixty-six. He was a foundation member of the Dickens Fellowship and one of the world's leading authorities on the novelist. He edited the Nonesuch Press edition of Dickens's letters, and played a leading part in the purchase of the Novelist's house in Doughty Street for use as a Dickens Museum.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS AND CABLES

As soon as health and circumstances permit, but not, I fear, in time for the Memorial Number, I will write and send you my Tribute to Walter Dexter, greatest of Dickensians and my dearly loved friend.—Count de Suzannet, Lausanne, Vice-President, Dickens Fellowship.

* * * * *

Walter Dexter was greatly loved and admired by all of us here. He was a great scholar, and his kindness and unfailing helpfulness will be long remembered by us.—Mr. Arthur T. Ellis, Acting Keeper of Printed Books, British Museum.

* * * * *

"'We must all die' is the truest sentence that was ever spoken by any human being."—"Gadshill Gazette," January 1866.

A great Dickensian has gone. His passing will be profoundly deplored by all who knew him. He has left a rich legacy to Dickens lovers throughout the world. Walter Dexter, like Dickens himself, possessed a genius for making friends, and I count myself amongst them. A great memorial to his memory is No. 48.—Mr. H. G. Wade, Life President, Winnipeg Branch.

* * * * *

What a blow the Fellowship has suffered in the death of Mr. Dexter. It is difficult to realise that we shall not see that genial soul again on this side of the grave. He has certainly left his own memorial in *The Dickensian*, the continued excellence of which has always filled me with wonder and admiration.—Miss Mary Corney, of Manchester.

* * * * *

He has devoted his talents and best years to the magazine. Of course his loss will be felt here as well as in England. We can only commiserate with you in silence.—A. E. Schaaf, Cleveland, Ohio.

* * * * *

His prominence in all Dickensian matters is unchallengeable and his loss to the Fellowship cannot be estimated.—Mr. Geo. H. Boothman, of Liverpool.

* * * * *

"Kindly accept the enclosed cheque in memory of that rare and truly refreshing character, Walter Dexter. We came to know each other recently, and he proved a generous and kindly companion.—Pilot-Officer A. Harcourt Burrage.

* * * * *

The Pittsburgh Branch expresses its keen sense of loss at the untimely passing of this brilliant scholar, who has brought so much joy to the membership through the quarterly visits of *The Dickensian* to our homes and who has thereby, more than any other person, kept alive the memory of Charles Dickens.—Mr. Chester B. Story (President); Mrs. F. W. Fairman (Secretary), Pittsburgh, Pa., U.S.A.

* * * * *

The death of Mr. Walter Dexter severs a link with The Dickens Fellowship which we have come to value most highly. Our association with him extends over many years; he was always kindly, courteous and considerate, and our connection with him as Editor of *The Dickensian* will be to us a very fragrant memory.—Mr. David Drysdale, Messrs. A. Brown & Sons, Ltd., Printers of *The Dickensian*.

* * * * *

During the years we have known Mr. Dexter he showed us the greatest courtesy, and was so enthusiastic over his work on *The Dickensian* that he inspired us with the same enthusiasm, with the result that the greatest pleasure was derived by both of us.—Mr. J. C. Mason, Messrs. Siviter Smith, Ltd., Engravers to *The Dickensian*.

THE DEXTER MEMORIAL FUND

By the President, COMPTON MACKENZIE, O.B.E., LL.D.

THE WALTER DEXTER MEMORIAL FUND is established to ensure that his name shall be associated in perpetuity with The Dickens House, his connexion with which dated from before its acquisition, and continued with unbroken devotion till his unexpected death on May 16th, 1944. He was closely associated with B. W. Matz in the great conception of securing the House as a centre, a museum, and a library from which to foster the love of the novelist and his works. Dexter's services to the cultivation of Dickens lore is known all over the world; as a writer, a journalist, a lecturer, as editor of *The Dickensian*, his name is a household word. The Dickens House owes much to his generosity and public spirit, and he added considerably to its interesting collection of manuscripts, books and other objects connected with the life and writings of the novelist.

The aim of the Memorial Fund is to obtain an adequate endowment for the House.

It is now nearly twenty years since the Dickens House was opened as a Dickens Museum, containing a priceless collection of personal relics of the great writer as well as the most complete Dickensian library in the world. The cost of upkeep of such an establishment is considerable, and the only direct sources of income are the small entrance fee paid by visitors and the profits in the Sales room. From time to time the Trustees of the House have had financial assistance from the generosity of individual members and from Branches of the Dickens Fellowship; the Fellowship pays a small rent for the use of the House as its Headquarters, and *The Dickensian* also rents an office-address. These sources of revenue are supplemented by the donations (many of them annual) of the "Friends of the Dickens House," without whose subscriptions it would be practically impossible to carry on.

The need of a steady and assured revenue has always been a source

(*Continued at foot of page* 187)

THE "LIBRARY," "PEOPLES," AND "CHARLES DICKENS" EDITIONS

By the late WALTER DEXTER

APART from the original edition of Dickens's works, there were only five collected editions of his works published during his lifetime. These were the "Cheap," 1847; "Library," 1857; "Illustrated Library," 1861; "Peoples," 1865, and "Charles Dickens," 1867.

We have seen in a previous article* that the first cheap edition was not commenced until 1847, that is to say eleven years after the publication of *Pickwick*, and at a time when six major novels and the five Christmas Books had appeared.

The "Cheap Edition" was never intended to be anything more than its title implied; a means of introducing the novels into the homes of the less well-to-do—a steadily growing class in the late forties of the last century.

The better-class reader who prided himself on a Library—if he did not purchase the novels in monthly numbers as published, and have them suitably bound on their conclusion, bought what was known as the "Original Edition" in cloth at a guinea each for the longer novels; twenty-five shillings for *Oliver Twist* in three volumes (or eleven shillings if in one volume, octavo); and thirteen shillings each for *The Old Curiosity Shop* and *Barnaby Rudge*. The five *Christmas Books* and *Hard Times* cost five shillings each.

Many successive editions of these were published, bringing large profits to author and publisher alike.

Ten years elapsed before any attempt was made to put another new edition of the works on the market, and so sure were the publishers that the demand for Dickens was still great, that they still catered only for the better-class buyers, and there was no need to tempt the public with cheaper prices. In 1857 they launched the "Library Edition," issuing one work each month, at six shillings per volume. Now, as all the longer works were to be in two volumes, this meant that *Pickwick, Nicholas Nickleby, Dombey and Son*, etc., were still unobtainable under twelve shillings—except in the Cheap Edition, which, after all, was more suitable for the cottage than for the mansion. *Sketches by Boz* and *Oliver Twist* were each in one volume; the five *Christmas Books* were here combined for the first time and issued complete in one volume; another single volume was made up of *Pictures from Italy* and *American Notes*. *The Old Curiosity Shop* and *Reprinted Pieces* were combined and issued in two volumes, as also were *Barnaby Rudge* and *Hard Times*.

Contemporary advertisements inform us that the "Library Edition" was "undertaken with a view to the presentation of Mr. Dickens's writings in a far more convenient form, at once for present perusal and for preservation, than any of them have yet appeared in." A new fount of type was made expressly for the purpose, and, the announcement continued, "great care has been taken to render the series legible, compact and handsome."

A new vignette engraving by Phiz adorned the title page of each volume; it was otherwise without illustrations.

The "Library Edition" was a great success; the comparatively slim volumes were more easily handled than the bulky original editions, and the print was considerably larger and clearer. So great was the success, that in February, 1861, it was decided to publish a monthly issue containing all the original illustrations; this was known as "The

*1943 Volume page 112.

Illustrated Library Edition," and the price was seven shillings and sixpence a volume ; the longer novels were still obtainable, in two volumes each ; the volumes were in fact printed from the same stereos as those used for the Library Edition.

The " People's Edition " of 1865 was an attempt to give in a slightly cheaper form what was now known as the Cheap and Uniform Edition. This was priced two shillings a volume, and was bound in boards, with a striking illustration on the green covers. The same arrangement was made as with the Library edition, the larger works were still in two volumes, but *Oliver Twist*, *A Tale of Two Cities* were in one volume each ; *Great Expectations* in its first really cheap form (two shillings) was added to this edition.

Twenty years after the first publication of the cheap edition of his works, Dickens and his publishers advertised what eventually proved to be the most popular and most widely circulated of all the editions issued during the author's lifetime. This was " The Charles Dickens Edition," the first cheap edition for twenty years in which each novel was published in a single volume.

The first to appear was *Pickwick*, price 3/6, on 31st May, 1867, and thereafter one volume was issued each month, until the whole series was complete in 18 volumes. Sets in cloth were priced at £2/18/-, in full morocco six guineas, and in half-morocco, or half-calf, four guineas.

According to the advertisements at the time, " The Charles Dickens Edition " was specially devised by Dickens and his publishers " to combine legibility with durability and cheapness " ; each volume contained " eight of the original illustrations selected as the best," and in addition " a descriptive headline will be attached by the author to every right-hand page."

There was some rearrangement of volumes containing more than one work. *The Old Curiosity Shop* and *Barnaby Rudge* were issued alone as single volumes ; *Hard Times* was combined with *Pictures from Italy* in one volume at 3/- ; *Reprinted Pieces* appeared in the same volume as *American Notes*, at the same price.

The " Charles Dickens Edition " enjoyed a popularity of close on fifty years ; it was very attractively produced, each page being enclosed within a border, and with the helpful descriptive line on the right hand page. The binding was strong and of roughed red cloth with gilt lettering on the back and the facsimile signature of Charles Dickens on the front side.

(*Continued from page* 185)

of some anxiety, as there is still a mortgage on the property, although it is well covered by the value of the freehold.

The Dexter Memorial Fund is established to secure a steady income of at least £150 a year free from all fluctuations. A capital sum of £4000 to £5000 is required. It will not conflict in any way with the War Effort of the Nation, as all moneys received will be invested in Government Stock and will so become immediately available for the prosecution of the war against a tyranny that would have been loathed by so great a democrat and lover of freedom as Charles Dickens ; the House will benefit by the interest on the investment.

Subscriptions to the Dexter Memorial Fund should be sent to Leslie C. Staples, Hon. Secretary of The Dickens Fellowship, 23 St. Andrew's Road, Bedford, and will be acknowledged in *The Dickensian*.

BLEAK HOUSE AND MACBETH

By J. H McNULTY

BLEAK HOUSE is one of the greatest books Dickens wrote; to call it "the greatest" would be to invite opposition and to start, or re-start, a controversy which will never be settled. The greatest, or at least the favourite book, for most of us, is generally the one most recently read.

Although it is one of the longest of the novels, with a multitude of characters, it has a unity which no other of equal length possesses. The loose construction of a Dickens novel is usually held together by the life-story of the nominal hero, but here, as in "Macbeth," there is no hero, but a great villain, and the villain is the law. Most of the characters live by the law or die by it, wax rich or are ruined by it, thrive on it or are broken-hearted by its never-ending quibbles and tragic delays. *Bleak House*, too, is an answer to certain ideas held by many concerning Dickens, and a refutation of them.

The belief that Dickens could not draw a gentleman is disproved by Sir Leicester Dedlock, not one of "nature's gentlemen," of whom Dickens has scores, but a gentleman of the gentlemanly class, with all the faults, and all the virtues too, of that class; his noble treatment of his unhappy wife proves this. Some have thought that Dickens never developed; that he sprang to full stature with the *Pickwick Papers* and stayed there, but Chadband is a development of Stiggins; one is farce, the other comedy. If Stiggins was a curate, Chadband might be considered a high dignitary, say, an Archdeacon at least in the sect of which these delightful gentlemen were members. The whole book is a development of the law scenes in *Pickwick*, but what in the earlier work is a series of brilliant skirmishes is in *Bleak House* a well-planned campaign.

A far-seeing critic might have prophesied the coming of *Bleak House*. He might have argued, "If a young author at the beginning of his career can write so brilliantly of the law, he will one day devote a book to the subject"; that book is *Bleak House*. The man in the cobbler's story in *Pickwick*, who was ruined by having money left him is the case of Jarndyce and Jarndyce in miniature, only rather worse. There was a disputed will, and the end was the Chancery Court; the legacy was lost, "and what between the estate, as they call it, and the costs, I'm here for ten thousand pounds." "Here" was the Fleet Prison, where Mr. Pickwick and Sam Weller were imprisoned. Had *Bleak House* been left unfinished, the question "who killed Tulkinghorn?" would have been discussed in the same way as the question "Who is Datchery?" or "Is Drood dead?" is discussed and debated to-day.

The fog of the opening chapter is a symbol of the fog of the law, but to Londoners it is something more. It is part of our childhood. If our youth is not too far distant, or our memories are sufficiently good we well remember the time when we loved a fog, how we watched the houses on the other side of the street disappearing, how we saw with delight the iron railings which divided the front garden from pavement becoming invisible, and then at last nothing could be seen beyond the window pane and we were enclosed in perfect isolation. How delightful it was to go out into the familiar streets, now no longer familiar but full of mystery, to make our way at night from one dim lamp, which quickly disappeared, to the next, which slowly emerged from the opaque darkness. We loved fog when we were children, and it is a sign of middle or old age when we discover that it has more discomforts than pleasures; as Dickens never grew old, perhaps, he never made the discovery. Fog, too, is or was distinctive of London, the thing

our capital produced to perfection, "A London Particular," yellow as peasoup, or an atmospheric attack of the jaundice. Is it too fanciful to see a connection between the disease and the famous law-suit? Perhaps so, but it is a fact, and no fancy, that the opening chapter is one of the most vivid pieces of description in the whole of the novels; out of the fog there appear the Lord Chancellor sitting in his High Court of Chancery with his satellites and victims around him, Mr. Tangle and his learned friends, poor Miss Flite with her birds, to be liberated when she obtained a judgement, on the day of judgement, and the Man from Shropshire "purging himself of his contempt."

There is a curious similarity between "Macbeth" and *Bleak House* —darkness plays a great part in both. In the play it is generally a prelude to murder. In the novel it has a less tragic significance. The play opens with the appearance of the witches "on an open Place," and as they vanish they cry:

> "Fair is foul, and foul is fair,
> Hover through the fog and filthy air."

The book begins in the yellow twilight of a London fog. Throughout the play we are continually reminded of the prevailing darkness. It is a moonless, starless night when Macbeth sees the phantom-dagger the prelude to the murder of the king.

> "The moon is down; . . .
> . . .There's husbandry in heaven,
> Their candles are all out."

of the day after the murder, Rosse says:

> ". . . by the clock, 'tis day,
> And yet dark night strangles the travelling lamp;
> Is it night's predominance, or the day's shame,
> That darkness does the face of earth intomb,
> When living light should kiss it?"

On the evening of the night when Banquo is murdered, Macbeth notes the approach of darkness:

> ". . . Light thickens; and the crow
> Makes wing to the rooky wood:
> Good things of day begin to drop and drowse;
> When night's black agents to their prey do rouse."

The weird sisters appear on the heath by day, but when Macbeth wishes to consult them he must go to a "dark cave." Darkness persists almost to the end, to the terrible sleep-walking scene, when Lady Macbeth, who has a light by her continually, carries a taper as she walks, for she fears the horrors of the dark.

Turn to *Bleak House*, and there is again this strange persistence of darkness. "Tom-All-Alone's" is a dark and dilapidated street. Mr. Vholes lives in an "office in disposition retiring, in situation retired. Three feet of knotty floored dark passage brings the client to Mr. Vholes's jet black door, in an angle profoundly dark on the brightest midsummer morning and encumbered by a black bulk-head of cellarage staircase against which belated civilians generally strike their brows." The chapter entitled "The appointed Time" begins with a passage strongly reminiscent of "Macbeth":

"It is night in Lincoln's Inn—perplexed and troublous valley of the shadow of the law—where suitors generally find but little day—and fat candles are snuffed out in offices, and clerks have rattled down the crazy wooden stairs, and dispersed. The bell that rings at nine o'clock, has ceased its doleful clangour about nothing; the gates are shut;

and the night porter, a solemn warder with a mighty power of sleep, keeps guard in his lodge." This might almost be a passage from the play itself. The chapter closes with Guppy crying out for water to cleanse his hand from the filth of that horrible house where Krook met his mysterious death: "Give me some water or I shall cut my hand off," cries Guppy in horror; and we are reminded of the words of the conscience-tortured queen as she washes her hands in vain:

> "'Out damned spot! out, I say!'"
> What, will these hands ne'er be clean?
> All the perfumes of Arabia will not
> Sweeten this little hand."

Though there is darkness, there is light; otherwise we might doubt the authorship of the book, for Dickens is like the man mentioned in Boswell's "Life of Johnson," "cheerfulness is always breaking in." Chadband is as big a humbug as Pecksniff, but he brightens every scene in which he appears. Grandfather Smallweed is a nasty, vicious, but amusing old man; so in a different way is Turveydrop. Many of Dickens's characters would not be very pleasant to meet or have much to do with in real life, but they are delightful in a book, and as Boileau says of a sister art:

> "Il n'est de serpent, ni de monstre odieux
> Qui par l'art imité ne puisse plaire aux yieux."*

The greatest Chadband scene is the tea party at Snagsby's. Poor Mr. Snagsby appears to be hungry, and objects to wait after six, the hour at which the Chadbands are expected, and when they do arrive the reverend gentleman holds forth and is interrupted by Guster with the words "one thousing seven hundred and eighty two, if you please, Sir, wishes to know what the shilling ware for." Even the underpayment of the cabman who demands one and eightpence gives Chadband ground for a further disquisition: "It might justly have been one and four, it might justly have been half-a-crown." Yes, it might, and a very small sum, indeed, for moving such a vast mountain of fat as Chadband was. There is delightful humour in Mrs. Bayham Badger's praise of her distinguished deceased husbands, and brilliant satire in the description of a Cabinet Crisis, and especially in the political conversation at Sir Leicester Dedlock's where the problem is "What to do with Noodle?"

There is humour and pathos in the uncomfortable households of Mrs. Jellyby and Mrs. Pardiggle, each of whom imagined she had a mission. Mrs. Jellyby's actions contradicted the proverb which says "Charity begins at home." Her charity begins abroad and never reaches her home. Mrs. Pardiggle's slumming activities resemble the once famous definition of Social Reform, "bullying the poor to make them do what they don't want to." "Miss Wisk's mission was to show the world that woman's was man's mission; and that the only genuine mission, of both man and woman, was to be always moving declaratory resolutions about things in general at public meetings." Mr. Vholes had no mission, but he had a duty to his three daughters and his venerable father in the Vale of Taunton. He attended to his clients' interests, even during the vacation, day by day, and he was willing to go on attending to those interests, of course, for a reasonable fee. What good ever came to those interests from all this attending, no one ever discovered. Nothing disturbed the equanimity of Mr. Vholes, his clients might fume and worry at the lack of progress, at the never-ending case, but Mr. Vholes remained calm, tranquil, un-

* "There is no snake nor hideous monster
Which, by imitative art, fails to please the eye."

moved, pursuing the even tenor of his way, a little hurt at his clients' impatience, but nothing more.

Mr. Bucket is the father of English Detective Fiction, though he would scarcely recognise some of his children. The modern development of detective stories is amazing, their ingenuity marvellous, and many of them might justly be called masterpieces. In nearly all of them the clever amateur puts the official detective to shame and solves the problem which has baffled the Police. In *Bleak House* Inspector Bucket has no rival, and none of the paraphernalia of modern detection, but he finds the criminal. It is questionable whether Dickens would ever have been a master in this sort of writing. He took greater interest in character than in plot, though he left the world one insoluble problem. The mystery of Edwin Drood has never been satisfactorily solved, and never will be, for every solution by one expert is contradicted by another expert. In every novel of Dickens there are sentences, phrases, sometimes single words, witty, humourous or pathetic, which express more than any lengthy description could. "All the chosen coin of fancy flashing out from many a golden phrase," as Tennyson puts it. In *Bleak House* there are plenty of these: Mr. Tangle's learned friends "bob up like eighteen hammers in a pianoforte," London's flakes of soot are like "full grown snowflakes gone into mourning for the death of the sun." "Wiglomeration" is a fine phrase to describe a discussion between lawyers, and a hint of further litigation. At Mr. Tulkinghorn's funeral "the amount of inconsolable carriages was immense," and the city's smoke is affectionately called "London's ivy." Perhaps the outstanding feature of the book is the excellence of the construction; as in a great piece of tapestry each thread is held in its place by the loom till the picture is complete, so here each of the numerous themes is kept in its right position by the loom of genius until the book is brought to a conclusion; and we may say of it as Goethe said of Marlowe's Dr. Faustus, "How greatly is it all planned."

Rockingham Castle, Northamptonshire
the Chesney Wold of *Bleak House*

PHIZ'S ILLUSTRATIONS TO *BLEAK HOUSE*

By KENTLEY BROMHILL

(*Continued from page* 150)

17. Visitors at the Shooting Gallery.—A slight air of caricature pervades this plate, but perhaps Phiz couldn't help himself where old Smallweed was concerned. The fine upstanding figure of George forms a fine foil for the shrivelled and skinny old man, who this time does look as if "his mind is unimpaired." Phil Squod, in his Zouave tunic, provides a further touch of comedy.

18. The young man of the name of Guppy.—Lady Dedlock's luxurious boudoir at Chesney Wold has given Browne an opportunity, wanting in two or three of the previous etchings, for providing an elegance to which Mr. Guppy, in spite of his elaborate toilet, makes a violent and effective contrast. It will be noticed that Sir Leicester is reading to his wife "some congenial remarks" from his newspaper—the "Morning Post"; of course Phiz knew that.

19.* Nurse and patient.—A really good specimen of Browne's art at its simplest and most delicate. Nothing distracts the attention from the central figures, each of which is in the classical tradition of Flaxman's outlines. And yet the artist has not forgotten that in a sick room there must be medicines and a housekeeper's little basket with her keys, and a watch-pocket over the head of the bed.

20.* The appointed time.—A fully adequate illustration of the scene of Krook's death. There is no need to treat it in detail; it so closely follows the words of the text. The thick smoke mercifully conceals the "Horror, he is here." The sense of horror is increased by the Jack-o'-lantern hanging (!) from the ceiling. Very minor matters are that Jobling, apparently arisen from a nap in the market-gardens, has borrowed Guppy's trousers for the occasion, and that the kettle looks as intoxicated as ever Krook was. Krook's spectacles and pipe are not inflammable.

21.* The old man of the name of Tulkinghorn.—This plate is one of the great successes of *Bleak House*. In no other instance has Browne been more careful, although there is little to help him in the text. He has furnished the library in the Dedlock town house in a fashion to make a librarian's mouth water. The family portraits in their successive generations are worthy of more than a passing glance, and the centre table should be examined as the pattern has now disappeared; it is fitted with drawers, as was the fashion (the writer saw one of these tables in the library of Sir Richard Owen, the great anatomist). But it is the study of expressions that is the triumph of the artist. Lady Dedlock, dressed to go out to dinner, having been cold and disdainful to the young man of the name of Guppy, is getting apprehensive at the entrance of the old man of the name of Tulkinghorn; the transition of these moods is reflected in her face and attitude. Guppy, looking snubbed and disconcerted by the entrance of the old lawyer, sneaks out of the room on tiptoe. Tulkinghorn, with his inscrutable mask as the depository of family secrets, comes in softly, but not on tiptoe. A masterpiece.

22. Mr. Smallweed breaks the pipe of peace.—Something has gone seriously wrong with this picture. Look at Number 14. The room is an entirely different one although there is no record that the Smallweeds had more than one reception room. Had Browne forgotten that he had already drawn a picture of the room? Why did Dickens pass it? The porter's chairs are not in the old places; the fireplace is different and the little brass gallows is not the same pattern and, further, there is now a mirror; where is the table? The malignity

* The eight illustrations selected for the Charles Dickens edition are indicated thus.

in Smallweed's face is in marked contrast to the imbecility of his former expression; we are spared a comparison between Mrs. Smallweed and her former self—in both pictures her face is hidden, perhaps mercifully.

23. Lady Dedlock in the wood.—Getting no help from the text: "a seat had been erected commanding a lovely view," Browne has indulged his love of landscape and has invented a glorious beech tree with a seat round its bole. It is a well-balanced and charming picture; Charley gathering violets (it must have been springtime), while Lady Dedlock, all solicitude instead of haughty and self-restrained, is with Esther submissive and modestly occupying the centre.

24. The Ghost's Walk.—This is supposed to be founded on the Yew Walk of Rockingham Castle (see note to Frontispiece), but is nothing like it. The Walk is a somewhat narrow avenue of closely cut yew-trees, and there is no broad flagged terrace pavement, and it is more than doubtful whether any drip, drip, drip from the bushes would be heard on the gravel path; moreover it certainly does not lie "in a deep shade of masonry" as it does in this picture. The architecture in this picture repeats that of the house in the frontispiece. Phiz has managed the masses of black with great judgement, and the bright light on the horizon is well conceived and gives just that touch of menace and mystery associated with ghosts.

25. Attorney and Client.—Here is the consulting room of a successful and prosperous lawyer, and it must have been drawn with an actual apartment in Browne's mind. Examine the fittings: a bookcase on one side of the fireplace and tin boxes in the opposite recess; see the names on the latter—"De Maine estate," "Sharps," "Holdfast Esq.", "J. Flint Esq"; the heavy safe in the corner; letter-files and a feather duster and a date-rack on the mantelshelf; the fox and the grapes as part of the carved overmantel, and below them two wolves' heads; the butterfly-net against the wall; the three judges' portraits, the centre one smiling cunningly at the interview between Richard and Vholes; the blue-bag on the chair; by an overthrown wastepaper basket is an announcement of a foolscap for sale, and by that a book open and shewing the plan of a maze and a mass of tangled string. In the midst of all this accumulation of symbols of the Law's intricacies (only a spider's web is wanting, but Vholes is too tidy and buttoned-up for that) sit Richard distraught with his difficulties, and Vholes, "thumbs-up," with a delightfully not-committal expression, while behind him is a cat watching for a mouse, and a bellows to fan a dying fire. Phiz must have spent so much time and trouble with this wonderful allegory that one might enquire: "Who is the greater satirist of Chancery suits, Phiz or Boz?"

26. Sunset in the Long Drawing Room at Chesney Wold.—A beautifully drawn interior recalling the finish of one of Joseph Nash's "English Mansions of the Olden Time" (1839). Chesney Wold is agreed to contain many of Dickens's recollections of Rockingham Castle (see note to frontispiece), but this noble apartment bears no resemblance to the drawing room of Rockingham Castle, as can be seen from the photograph in Ward's "The Real Dickens Land." The way in which Browne has adhered to the text is remarkable; the "frozen Dedlocks round the walls (the pride of Mrs. Rouncewell's heart) are thawing in the glorious gold of this sunset hour, and "upon my Lady's picture over the great chimney-piece a vivid shade falls from some old tree."

27.* Sir Leicester Dedlock.—A "conversation piece" suitably arranged and charmingly carried out, with Harold Skimpole as comic relief. Note that the artist still preserves the distinction he always observes between Esther and Ada.

28. Tom-all-Alone's.—An excellent study in wash and line of the tumbling remains of a narrow side street of an old London that even at the time of the story was disappearing by its own disintegration. "It is a moot point whether Tom-all-Alone's be uglier by day or by night." Probably after seeing the place here by night the reader will not wish to see it by day.

29. A new meaning in the Roman.—The moonlight shines into the darkened chamber, reflected from the polished furniture, and making visible the table with its extinguished candles, the armchair, the decanter and wineglass, and shewing on the floor a stain from which has been carried the body of Mr. Tulkinghorn to be laid on a bed. There is just sufficient light to show dimly on the ceiling the Roman attended by his big-legged boys. The mystery of the night and the tragedy of it are wonderfully conveyed, and a sub-title for its powerful conception might be "The Empty Chair."

30. Friendly behaviour of Mr. Bucket.—Another typical example of a Phiz domestic fireside. This etching bears signs of hurry, especially in the faces, which lack the finish one expects from so painstaking a draughtsman as Browne. Nevertheless the text has been as carefully read as usual; see Mrs. Bagnet filling Mr. Bucket's pipe after having put his grog by his side. Mr. Bagnet is beating time to Woolwich's performance of the British Grenadiers—a capital touch.

31.* Light.—Ada, with devotion and self-sacrifice depicted on her face, has just announced her secret marriage to Richard, who is "so tired," shewing on his countenance "premature anxiety, self-reproach and disappointment" with all his hopes. Esther's face is hidden behind her veil so that the reader cannot see the marks of her recent illness. Browne has contrived all this with the greatest economy of means, and indeed sums up the whole sad story of the Chancery suit in this sympathetically conceived picture.

32. Shadow.—Browne here has another opportunity of showing his mastery of the technique of wash and line and the manipulation of heavy shadows. The staircase of the eighteenth century town mansion with a Thorwaldsen plaque on the wall and an over-ornamented clock pointing to 1.20 a.m. In the well of the staircase there is a "murderous group of statuary" with weapon all complete. The Reward, of which a copy has been posted by Sir Leicester Dedlock, was for one hundred guineas, but Browne has made it pounds.

34. Mrs. Bagnet returns from her expedition.—The text is a theatrically conceived scene of the discovery of a long-lost son by a sorrowing parent, so dear to the "earnest student of the drama" as exhibited in melodrama, and this is the kind of spacious cell one would expect to see in a theatrical production; more roomy and much better lighted than the grim actuality.

35. The lonely figure.—Dickens must have appreciated Browne's skill in darkened scenes or he wouldn't have given him so many chances of showing it. The whole of the book is under the shadow of tragedy accomplished or impending, and one is not surprised that for one of the illustrations Dickens should have chosen this subject of the brick-kilns on a wild and snowy night with the lonely figure of Lady Dedlock struggling against the storm. A "deserted blighted spot" indeed.

36. The Night.—More on the same theme, this time with the pursuers instead of the pursued. Darkness and mystery are not yet done with: Bucket on the box and Esther under the hood of the carriage, the postillion on the horse in front, with a skilful indication of the drifting snow on their coats and the knee-rug.

37. The morning.—This is the end of the long pursuit. Once more the hemmed-in churchyard, this time from outside the gate under the archway. It is well known that Dickens was always person-

ally much affected by the course of his stories as he wrote them, and in *Bleak House* the reader seems to sense that Browne was equally affected; one can almost feel that he had taken his work very much to heart to have produced so touching a series of plates connected with the tragedy of Lady Dedlock. So moving—and so restrained.

38.* Magnanimous conduct of Mr. Guppy.—Here was a change for Browne after his drawings of tragedy, and he "lets himself go" in this picture, producing a genuine bit of comedy. Without neglecting the background entirely he has arranged the hand-screen as a halo round Guppy's head and then has concentrated all his powers on the delineation of character. Guppy, urgent but magnanimous, in his best clothes, including a brilliant shirt front and an immense neck-cloth, correctly striped trousers, with his hand (the right hand this time) much nearer his heart than it was before; his mother sly, smug, "smiling waggishly" and ready to cram her handkerchief into her mouth on the shortest notice, nudging Jobling *alias* Weevle from time to time; Jobling himself arrayed in "aristocratic" garments (quœre: borrowed) although his hair still looks as if he had recently got up from a bed in the "market-gardens down by Deptford."

39. The Mausoleum at Chesney Wold.—This gloomy subject forms a fitting final illustration to a tale full of gloomy portents and tragic fulfilments. It opened in fog; it closes in darkness. Nemo is dead and buried, Jo is dead and buried, Gridley is dead and buried, Krook is dead and buried, Tulkinghorn is dead and buried, Lady Dedlock is dead and buried, Richard is dead and buried, and the Chancery Suit is dead and buried; and here is the Mausoleum symbolizing the end. This picture does, however, show glimpses of brighter things on the horizon and so makes room for Esther's epilogue in the final chapter.

* * *

There is no Mausoleum at Rockingham Castle. Dickens may have drawn his inspiration for Chesney Wold from his intimate knowledge of Rockingham Castle, and its owners, but the two places, the one a fiction and the other a reality, are quite distinct. An author must draw his inspiration from experience, but he must be allowed *some* originality; this is one reason why Chesney Wold is in Lincolnshire and not in Northamptonshire where Rockingham Castle is situated.

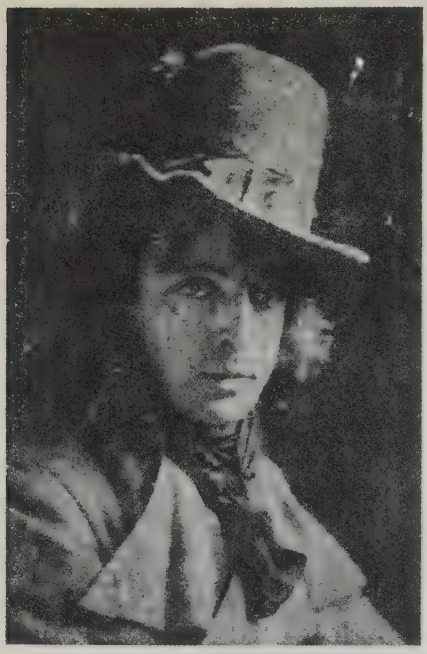
THE SAFETY OF THE ROADS

Writing in "Cycling" on June 14th, "G. H. S." laments the difficulty of securing a coroner's verdict against obviously guilty parties at inquests on road fatalities. He continues: "I am often reminded of the incident in Dickens's *Tale of Two Cities*, when the recklessly driven carriage of a French nobleman kills a child in the streets of Paris and the owner contemptuously throws a coin to the stricken parent—"in full settlement," as we now say. But Dickens lived before this kind of transaction had become a commonplace, and in his story he allows the child's parent to take the law into his own hands and exact a retributive penalty at the point of the knife. So far as the modern generation is concerned, nothing has been done to mitigate the evil except to increase the rates of compensation paid to injured persons or to the dependants of those who are killed."

SIR JOHN MARTIN-HARVEY

WITH the passing of Sir John Martin-Harvey on May 14th, at the age of 80, the British Stage loses one of the last of the great actor-managers, and a player of grace, delicacy and natural distinction.

This "great romantic with power to sway a crowded house," to quote the beautiful obituary by Mr. James Agate, "always moved me profoundly. He had one quality which often your world shaker may make shift to dispense with but which is the basis of a great spirit. This is the power to postulate a world in which the standard of human thought and creation is noble. The mean and the shoddy could not breathe his air. Some have called this urbanity; I should like to call it poetry. Harvey's world was noble, urbane and poetical." A fitting world for Sydney Carton, in which rôle Sir John had no rival. Without doubt, his performance has been the greatest success achieved by any actor in a Dickens character. He played it first at the Lyceum Theatre in 1899 and has since repeated it some 5000 times. He played a scene from it at the Dickens Centenary Festival at the Coliseum in 1912 and again at the Pickwick Centenary Matinée at the Palladium in 1936. The outbreak of the present war found him still playing it, and only recently he declared that he was prepared to resume when the present conflict ended. It was a performance of very great beauty, instinct with romance, especially in the earlier years, and unlikely to be forgotten by anyone who saw it.



Sir John Martin-Harvey
as Sydney Carton

The story of the writing and production of his version of the novel is a romantic story in itself, and was fully told in a long introduction to the printed play, published for the first time in 1942. But long before that, in 1927, Sir John had told the story for the benefit of the readers of *The Dickensian*.

Sydney Carton was not the only Dickens character he essayed. He was fond of recalling that when his revered chief, Sir Henry Irving, revived his version of "Pickwick," originally produced in 1871, "young Jack Harvey," who was then eighteen and commencing his stage career in the Lyceum company, doubled the parts of Sam Weller and the Fat Boy. Being anything but adipose, the latter character presented some difficulty in the way of make-up. Padding his figure was simple enough, but what of his face! An old stager came to his rescue with the suggestion of his placing a skinned fig in either cheek.

The result was admirable, for not only did this give rotundity of countenance, but produced a slobbering speech that reduced Irving to laughter on the stage.

At the latter end of his career he played Magwitch in "The Convict," a version of "Great Expectations" at the Westminster Theatre in 1935, a rugged performance of sincerity and pathos.

Sir John Martin-Harvey was elected a Vice-President of the Dickens Fellowship in its earliest years, and he never failed to take an interest in its welfare. He was a principal speaker at the Pickwick Centenary Banquet in 1936, and he was frequently entertained by Canadian Branches during his many tours of the Dominions with "The Only Way." Only a few months ago, noticing that we were to hear an address on "The Actor's Debt to Dickens," he wrote, "Who owes a greater debt to Dickens than I?"

The Dickens Fellowship was well represented at the Memorial Service that was held on June 1st at St. Paul's, Covent Garden, the church where rest the ashes of Ellen Terry, who was so long associated with his beloved Sir Henry.

L. C. S.

BY OTHER NAMES—II

By what other names were these characters known?

1. The elder Wemmick.
2. John Dawkins.
3. Pepper.
4. Solomon Pross.
5. Meltham.
6. Robin Toodle.
7. Rigaud.
8. Noah Claypole.
9. Alice Marwood.
10. Reginald Wilfer.
11. Mrs. Crisparkle.
12. Mrs. Skewton.
13. Neckett.
14. David Crimp.
15. Charles St. Evrémonde.
16. Winks.
17. Richard Babley.
18. Smike.
19. Jem Hutley.
20. David Copperfield.
21. Cleaver.
22. Alfred Jingle.
23. Jesse Haxam.
24. George Rouncewell.
25. Nicodemus Boffin.
26. Mrs. Henry Spiker.
27. John Harmon.
28. Rigaud.
29. Matthew Bagnet.
30. Dora Copperfield.
31. Rosa Bud.
32. Gridley.
33. Rose Flemming.
34. Edward Leeford.
35. Montague Tigg.
36. Captain Hawdon.
37. Mrs. Markleham.
38. Philip Pirrip.
39. Abel Magwitch.
40. Rosa Bud.
41. Polly Toodle.
42. Robin Toodle.
43. John Harmon.
44. Harris.
45. Trent.
46. Rev. Stiggins.
47. Bentley Drummle.
48. Durdles.
49. Harriet Beadle.
50. Tim Cratchit.
51. Poor Jo.
52. Wopsle.
53. Tony Jobling.
54. Fanny Cleaver.
55. Mr. Mivins.

The answers of the questions asked on p. 126 of the last number.

NOTES.—Nos. 6 and 42
No. 7 and 28
No. 27 and 43
} Two different names required in each case.
No. 31 and 40 (Miss Scornful Pert also correct here).
No. 20. Daisy also correct.
No. 30. Child-wife also correct.

NOTES ON *THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD*

By T. W. HILL

Introduction

1. CLOISTERHAM. Chapter III opens with these words: "For sufficient reasons . . . a fictitious name must be bestowed upon the old cathedral town. Let it stand in these pages as Cloisterham." It has been generally agreed (although nowhere does Dickens specifically say so) that Rochester, close to Dickens's home at Gad's Hill, was intended, and throughout the book the resemblances are so identifiable as to be almost exact. Dickens goes on: "It was possibly known to the Druids by another name,* and certainly to the Romans by another,† and to the Saxons by another,‡ and to the Normans by another,§ and a name more or less in the course of centuries can be of little moment." The notes will therefore deal with the topographical allusions in the book as though they refer actually to Rochester. But it should be borne in mind that Rochester's famous castle is not mentioned at all; that, whilst a weir at Cloisterham plays an important part in the story, there is no weir at Rochester, the nearest being seven miles away; and that there are other discrepancies between the two cities that are noticed in their appropriate places. It may well be that Dickens has reverted to an early practice and has incorporated in his fictitious cathedral town some features from other towns, or even invented some features for the purpose (what he calls "sufficient reasons") of his story.

2. THE PERIOD OF THE STORY. There are several lines of enquiry to be pursued to arrive at the date, and this is the subject of a special article. (See *Dickensian*, 1944, page 113, "Drood Time in Cloisterham.")

3. THE PLOT. No attempt is made to elucidate the "Mystery," as it is beyond the scope of these notes, which only deal with the unfinished book as a book.

Chapter I

1. GREY SQUARE TOWER. This is correct as a description of Rochester cathedral, although it now has a spire. (See the article on the period of the story.) Fildes's vignette drawing on the title-page shows the cathedral with a square pinnacled tower, and is, indeed, the only indication that identifies Cloisterham with Rochester.

2. JOHN CHINAMAN. He is only mentioned twice, here and in Chapter XXII, where he is called Jack.

3. DAILY VESPER SERVICE. "Vespers" is one of the evening services in the "Hours" of the Sarum Breviary (these were Matins, Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sexts, Nones, Vespers, and Compline). Although not an official name for the Anglican "Evening Prayer," which unites the Pre-Reformation Vespers and Compline, it is often used colloquially for brevity and convenience.

4. SULLIED WHITE ROBES. This only means literally that the surplices wanted washing; but perhaps Dickens also wished to convey a hint of spiritual "sullying."

5. FALLS INTO THE PROCESSION. That would be, of course, among the men and behind the boy choristers. In Chapter XXIII Jasper is said to be leading the line, which is obviously a mistake. Collins's drawing on the cover is correct, although the choir is a *very* small one.

6. LOCKS THE IRON-BARRED GATES. These at Cloisterham divide the sanctuary from the chancel, but at Rochester there is neither sanctuary nor chancel, the former being known as the Presbytery, and the latter as the Choir, with the Choir Transept between the two; the iron-barred gates divide the Nave from the Choir. The Sacristan should be the Verger (see Chapter II, "Mr. Tope, Chief Verger and Showman").

7. WHEN THE WICKED MAN——. The first of the Opening Sentences at Morning Prayer and at Evening Prayer in the Church liturgy. The full text from Ezek., xviii, 27, is: "When the wicked man turneth away from the wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive."

* Dourbryf; † Durobrivis; ‡ Hrofesceaster; § Rovecestre.

Chapter II

1. SEDATE AND CLERICAL BIRD. The rook has constantly been likened to a clergyman, probably from his nearly black plumage and the white patch (like a parson's bands) under his beak, combined with his stately and deliberate walk. Caricaturists are especially fond of him. He is associated with Cloisterham cathedral all through the book, and in Chapter III the clergy in the stalls are called "hoarse and less distinct rooks."

2. MONASTERY RUIN. On the south side of Rochester cathedral are the remains of a beautiful Norman cloister, the ruined Chapter House that extended into what is now the Deanery garden, and other portions of the ancient Priory of St. Andrew, dissolved in 1540.

3. LOW ARCHED CATHEDRAL DOOR. This is the small door north of, and adjoining, the Great West Door.

4. OLD STONE GATEHOUSE. The entry from High Street, Rochester, to the Cathedral Precincts. It is a fifteenth century building, with a timbered upper story originally known as Chertsey's or Cemetery Gate; its official name since the dissolution of the Priory in 1540 is College Gate. The roadway which takes the place of the old wall of the Priory and the houses that adjoined the gateway is of comparatively recent construction.

5. SNUG OLD RED-BRICK HOUSE. An exact description of the deanery.

6. EARLY TEA (for Jasper). Observe the chronology: Evensong at 4 o'clock; the service is over; the day is waning; the "deep Cathedral-bell strikes the hour" (5 o'clock); the Dean's dinner-bell summons him home (the fashionable dinner-hour is 5.30); Jasper goes home to his early tea, having probably dined at middle-day, as he was boarded by Mrs. Tope. In Chapter XII, also after the cathedral service "the Dean withdraws to his dinner, Mr. Tope to his tea, and Mr. Jasper to his piano."

7. GRAND PIANO. If Cloisterham is Rochester, and if the Old Stone Gatehouse is Jasper's Gateway, it is extremely doubtful whether it would be possible to convey a grand piano up the narrow and steep staircase giving access to Jasper's rooms.

8. TELL ME, SHEPHERDS. A pastoral glee, "The Wreath (Ye shepherds, tell me)," by Joseph Mazzinghi (1765-1844) popular in the nineteenth century with singing classes and choirs.

9. MODDLEY-CODDLEY. Probably a remembrance of Dickens's childhood's pronunciation of the more correct molly-coddle. Molly, a variant of Mary, means effiminate or babyish; coddle, is to treat as an invalid; hence to molly-coddle is to pet or make a fuss of.

10. MARSEILLAISE-WISE. It used to be the custom, and still is, on occasion, for a French crowd to sing the Marseillaise with their arms round each other's shoulders.

11. BEGONE DULL CARE. A seventeenth century ballad first printed in the "Musical Companion," published 1667 by John Playford (1613-93). The first verse runs:

> "Begone, dull Care, I prithee begone from me,
> Begone, dull Care, you and I shall never agree."

The second verse contains the phrase used by Edwin (see Note 14):

> "Too much Care will make a young man grey,
> And too much care will turn an old man to clay.
> My wife shall dance
> And I will sing,
> So merrily pass the day."

12. LAY PRECENTOR OR LAY CLERK. Jasper's exact position seems a matter of some doubt, even to the author. He is also described elsewhere as Choir-Master, Music Master, and as Precentor. He could not hold all these offices in a cathedral choir; his proper office was probably Lay Choral Clerk, *i.e.*, a professional chorister. He may, by courtesy, have been called Choir-Master, as it is possible he *may*, to assist the cathedral organist, have trained the boys' voices, but at Rochester the Organist is also "Master of the Choristers" since 1791; in the seventeenth century the organist (who was a Petty, or Minor, Canon) was also "teaching the children." Moreover, if Jasper led the singing, what were the duties of Minor Canon Crisparkle, who would normally take the priest's part in all the Responses? Note, that in Chapter XXIII Datchery says only: "he sings in the choir."

13. NICHE IN LIFE. One's niche is, figuratively, the place in the general scheme of things best suited to one's abilities and qualifications, just as a

statue has its appointed and particular niche (shell-like alcove) in or on a public building. A niche in the Temple of Fame—the Panthéon at Paris—is reserved for illustrious Frenchmen. William Cowper (1731-1800) effectively uses the word in "The Task" (1785):

"Just in the niche he was ordained to fill."

14. MY WIFE SHALL DANCE. See Note 11.

15. NOTHING HALF SO SWEET IN LIFE. From "Love's young dream," one of the "Irish Melodies" of Thomas Moore (1779-1852).

CHAPTER III

1. FICTITIOUS NAME. See Introduction.

2. SMALL SALAD. Seedlings of mustard and land-cress, commonly known as Mustard-and-Cress.

3. HOARSE AND LESS DISTINCT ROOKS. See Chapter II, Note 1.

4. PAVED QUAKER SETTLEMENT. According to the late Edwin Harris this was situated at Boley Hill, Rochester, close to the cathedral precints. It is only a passing topographical allusion, as it does not come into the story so far as told. There is a Friends' Meeting House in Northgate.

5. DESPONDENT LITTLE THEATRE. Another topographical detail not used in the story. Rochester Theatre Royal, built 1791, stood at the foot of Star Hill; it was closed 1884 and a Club erected on the site.

6. NUNS' HOUSE. A fanciful name with a fanciful derivation from a supposed conventual use; the building is usually said to be Eastgate House. It never was a convent, nor does it stand on the site of a Convent. It is a handsome sixteenth century red-brick house built by Sir Peter Burke, Clerk of the Cheque of H.M. Dockyard, Chatham. Here he entertained the King of Denmark in 1606. At the time Dickens was writing it accommodated a School for Young Ladies, and was acquired by the City Corporation in 1897 as a memorial of Queen Victoria's jubilee. It is now a museum.

7. SEEN BETTER DAYS. In Shakespeare's time this saying was already current with people whose worldly circumstances had deteriorated. In "Timon of Athens" the Steward says:

"Let's shake our heads, and say,
As 'twere a knell unto our Master's fortunes,
We have seen better days." Act IV, Sc. 2.

8. WANDERING JEWESS. The legend of the Wandering Jew who roamed the earth till the Judgement Day, in punishment for an insult offered to Our Lord on the way to Calvary, dates from the early Middle Ages, and is probably an embellishment of the Gospel narrative, calculated to make it more interesting and impressive to the illiterate. Poor Miss Twinkleton, evicted from her parlour with no other place to rest the soles of her feet.

9. DOWN THE KITCHEN STAIRS. The Nuns' House at Cloisterham seems to have had a basement, but Eastgate House at Rochester has none.

10. BELZONI DRAGGED OUT. Giovanni Battista Belzoni (1778-1853), famous traveller and explorer of Egyptian antiquities. The allusion in the text refers to his opening-up of the second Pyramid of Gizeh. In 1821 he held an exhibition in London of his collection. Thomas Hood mentioned him in his "Ode to W. Kitchener, M.D.":

"There came Belzoni, fresh from the ashes of Egyptian dead."

CHAPTER IV

1. RECEIVING YOU HERE FOR THE FIRST TIME. It is curious that Jasper and Sapsea had never met before, and that at their first meeting Sapsea should enter into intimate details of his private life, and should seek Jasper's opinion (not criticism) of the famous epitaph of Mrs. Sapsea. But of course we do not know how long Jasper had been living at Cloisterham.

2. WOODEN EFFIGY. This figure really existed, but not in Rochester High Street. At the time that Dickens was writing the book it could be seen over the portico of a house in St. Margaret's Banks.

3. WHEN THE FRENCH CAME OVER. See the "Drood Time in Cloisterham" in *The Dickensian*, 1944, page 113.

4. CHARTERED LIBERTINE. This expression is from Shakespeare:

"The air, a chartered libertine, is still."
"King Henry V," Act I, Sc. 1.

A libertine is one who is a law unto himself, does exactly as he pleases and

when he likes, being responsible to no one whatsoever; like the air indeed, that cares no more for a king than for a tramp.

5. UP IN THE CHANCEL. That is the Choir, to which, at Rochester, a considerable flight of steps leads from the nave of the cathedral.

6. ASK 'ERE A MAN. A very illiterate way of saying: "ask any man here." '*Ere* is pronounced *air*. 'Ere equals ever used as word of emphasis; ever a man means any possible man you care to choose.

7. TYING THE THIRD KEY UP. A few paragraphs before this Durdles had opened "the mouth of a large breast-pocket . . . before taking the key to place it in that repository." Apparently he changed his mind in favour of the dinner-bundle.

8. A HIT AT BACKGAMMON. The "hit" is the first score in the game; the "gammon" the second score; and "game" the third and final.

CHAPTER V

1. COCKSHY. In medieval sports, archers used a live cock as a target at which to shoot (it sounds cruel). Hence any rough-and-ready target at which to throw or shy became, figuratively, a cock; it is also applied to a butt for ridicule.

2. TRAVELLERS TWOPENNY, IN GASWORKS GARDING. Formerly an inferior inn or lodging-house in what is now the Maidstone road, then called Crow Lane. The site is now (1943) occupied by a furniture warehouse. By the way, Deputy would have said "Travellers' Tupny."

3. DURDLES WAS MAKING HIS REFLECTIONS. It is interesting to note that Durdles, throughout this conversation, gives no evidence of illiteracy or of his condition of "beery soddenness." On the contrary, he seems particularly lucid, speaking like an educated man with a good vocabulary.

4. PETER THE WILD BOY. A savage creature found in 1725 in a wood near Hameln in Hanover at the supposed age of thirteen. He "walked" on all fours, could climb trees like a squirrel, and had fed on grass, nuts, etc. King George I brought him to England in 1746. Efforts to reclaim him were practically unsuccessful, and he never learned to talk. He died in 1785.

5. LITTLE UNDERGROUND CHAPEL. The partly Norman and partly thirteenth century crypt of Rochester cathedral is unusually large. There were in ancient days no less than seven altars representing as many chapels. At the time of the story the crypt was much neglected and was used as a receptacle for builder's rubbish and discarded church furniture, and the window openings were unglazed, while some of them were boarded to keep out the worst of the weather. The crypt was cleaned up, refloored with cement, and the windows were all properly glazed late in the nineteenth century.

6. OLD 'UN WITH A CROOK. This was, of course, the tomb of a deceased bishop.

7. ONCE THE VINEYARD. The use of the word vineyard in the old monasteries often meant the orchard. The place is still called the "Vines" and is used as a public park.

8. SOME WOODEN FORGET-ME-NOT. Forget-me-not is here used, rather picturesquely, as a synonym for the commoner "souvenir."

9. RED CURTAINING. The old custom of having red curtains to the windows of inns has nearly died out, although they may be found in out-of-the-way places. They were superseded in the late nineteenth century by wire blinds, and now even these have now almost disappeared.

CHAPTER VI

1. PIER-GLASS. A pier-glass was originally a mirror placed on the pier between windows. Nowadays it is placed on the pier or chimney-breast over the fireplace. Occasionally one will be found against a wall supported by a bracket or console-table, perhaps with a mistaken notion that pier means peer or look at.

2. NO RAILWAY. See article "Drood Time in Cloisterham" in *The Dickensian*, 1944, page 113.

3. I WON'T DEPRIVE YOU OF IT. The same expression as that used by Sam Weller in the *Pickwick Papers*, Chap. XXXVII, in reply to Mr. John Smauker's offer of his arm. It is interesting to note the repetition in Dickens's last book of the phrase in his earliest novel.

Chapter VII

1. HINTING THE KEY-NOTE . . . HINTED THE ONE NOTE. Quite apart from the hypnotic effect of Jasper's gaze, the emphasis of his softly hinting the key-note would be very embarrassing to the singer, and to keep insisting on the key-note might be also very jarring, unhelpful and inartistic. It is not as though he were giving a lesson to someone who couldn't keep to the pitch; he was really "showing-off" a pupil before company.

Chapter VIII

1. HEATER IS ON THE FIRE. The heater was probably one of those funnel-shaped metal vessels for thrusting into the coals to warm its contents.

2. SEEMS TO REQUIRE MUCH MIXING. The addition of some drug or sleeping mixture is plainly hinted. See Neville's account of its effects, later in the chapter.

Chapter IX

1. TILBURY FORT. Here on August 8th, 1588, Queen Elizabeth reviewed her army and navy after the defeat of the Spanish Armada.

2. BIRD OF GRACEFUL PLUMAGE. It was Ben Jonson, in his "Tribute to the Memory of Shakespeare," who called him "Sweet swan of Avon." "The bird's song on the approach of death, for which we have no ornithological authority" has a classical foundation as the swan was the Bird of Apollo, and was credited with remarkable musical powers, exercised when its death was imminent. Shakespeare knew the legend and used it twice:

> "I will play the swan and die in music."
> "Othello," Act V, Sc. 2.

> "If he lose, he makes a swan-like end
> Fading in music."
> "Merchant of Venice," Act III, Sc. 2.

It is the fact that the so-called mute swan rarely uses its voice, except in the breeding season, when the male or cob trumpets loudly.

3. WHO DREW THE CELEBRATED JEW. This, of course, was Shakespeare, and the celebrated Jew was Shylock in "The Merchant of Venice." Miss Twinkleton had that evidently, in mind, without being able to remember the exact words Pope's tribute to Charles Macklin, whose real name was McLaughlin (1697-1797), the great Irish actor and dramatist, in his enormous success as Shylock on 14th February, 1741:

> "This is the Jew
> That Shakespeare drew."

4. RUMOUR, PAINTED FULL OF TONGUES. In the masques of the sixteenth century RUMOUR was a frequent character, and always arrayed in garments on which many tongues were embroidered or painted. In Thomas Campion's masque, St. Stephen's Night (1614) RUMOUR appears clad in a skin coat full of winged tongues. Shakespeare's first stage direction at the beginning of the Induction to King Henry the Fourth, Part II, reads, "Enter RUMOUR, painted full of tongues," and this is the immediate source of the frequent allusion.

5. LA FONTAINE. Jean de Lafontaine (1621-1695). Best known for his poetical versions of Aesop's Fables (1668). His verse is brilliant and free from all coarseness, and used to be a favourite medium for the acquisition of the French language in genteel ladies' academies.

6. AIRY NOTHINGS POINTED AT BY THE POET. Shakespeare again:

> "As imagination bodies forth
> The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
> Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothings
> A local habitation and a name."
> "Midsummer Night's Dream," Act V, Sc. 1.

7. CLAPPING ON A PAPER MOUSTACHE. From this phrase Percy Carden deduced that Neville wore a moustache, although Fildes in his illustrations depicts him as clean-shaved. Yet Dickens approved of both cover and pictures.

8. FUR TIPPET. A tippet is a kind of short cape.

9. FEW AND FAR BETWEEN. This simile has a poetic origin. Robert Blair (1699-1747) has this form in his poem " The Grave " :

" Visits like those of angels, short and far between."

Its usually accepted form is found in Thomas Campbell (1777-1844), whose " Pleasure of Hope " contains this line :

" Like angels' visits, few and far between."

10. A GUIDING MEMORANDUM. Mr. Grewgious's use of such an aid to memory is reminiscent of the same device to help Mr. Guppy (another legal person) at his interview with Lady Dedlock in *Bleak House*, Chap. XXIX.

11. CELESTIAL NINE. The author gives Miss Twinkleton a wide choice, for these are the Nine Muses, daughters of Zeus. In Greek mythology they presided over the liberal arts, and their names were Clio (history), Euterpe (lyric poetry) Thalia (comedy), Melpomene (tragedy), Terpsichore (music and dancing), Erato (amatory poetry), Calliope (epic poetry), Urania (astronomy), and Polyhymnia (singing). No wonder that Miss Twinkleton was looking upward and biting the end of her pen, waiting for the descent of an idea.

12. YOUTHFUL COTILLON. The Cotillon is a graceful dance of French origin performed by eight persons. That is why Mr. Grewgious, being an angular man, did not feel qualified (even if he had known the steps, which seems doubtful) to " advance and retire," and therefore recommended the Dancing Master.

13. POSSESSED YOU WITH THE CONTENTS. This use of the word " possess " is not common nowadays except with lawyers, but Dickens uses it occasionally. See *Bleak House*, Chap. II, where Mr. Tulkinghorn possessed the Dedlocks of new developments in the Jarndyce suit.

14. PEN-AND-INK-UBUS. This was an old pun even in Dickens's day.

15. CURTSY SUGGESTIVE OF MARVELS. A rather unkind suggestion that advancing years and stiffness might make the complexities of the curtsy difficult of attainment by the elderly Miss Twinkleton's respected (because concealed) legs. At any rate, her struggles landed her three yards (!) from where she started, which implies that she nearly overbalanced.

16. GREAT WESTERN DOOR. See Chap. II, Note 3.

17. CHANCEL STEPS. See Chap. IV, Note 5.

CHAPTER X

1. GOWN STILL ON. Jasper might well have returned in his cassock from the vestry to speak to Mrs. Crisparkle, but he certainly first retired with the choir to take off his surplice.

2. WANTED SUPPORT. Just the sort of expression a fussy mother would use before proceeding to administer a restorative.

3. CONSTANTIA. A wine produced in the province of that name near Capetown. It is sweet and has a delicious aroma ; it is a light dessert wine, and would not be a very potent pick-me-up.

4. DELICIOUS FUGUE. The apposite associations of the bust of Handel, a master of the fugue form, with the mixed aroma from the famous cupboard, only needs to be pointed out to be appreciated.

5. OUTLANDISH VESSELS OF BLUE AND WHITE. These roughly-finished pot-bellied jars are not very often seen nowadays, but they were, in their wicker or cane cases, at one time common in grocers' shops. Perhaps a few may still be preserved in china cabinets.

6. DOUBLE-BREASTED BUTTONED COAT. This delightful description of the jars in which pickles used to be kept is one of Dickens's inimitable similes. It recalls the tombstones of Pip's five little brothers in *Great Expectations* : *their* shape gave him the impression that " they had been born on their backs with their hands in their trousers-pockets."

7. INFUSIONS OF GENTIAN . . . Mrs. Crisparkle's stock of homely medicaments was doubtless prepared (distilled) in the Still Room ; it was before the days of multitudinous " patent " medicines, and when the virtues of herbal preparations were appreciated. Here is the full list of her medicines and the ailments for which they were used :

Gentian : a stomachic tonic.

Peppermint : carminative and comforting.

Gilliflower-water : for palpitation.

Sage : a gargle for sore-throat ; promotes perspiration.

Parsley : makes stimulating poultices.
Thyme : thyme-oil eases toothache, sprains, etc.
Rue : rue-oil is a powerful stimulant useful for flatulence and colic.
Rosemary : for nervous headache and hysteria.
Dandelion : dandelion-tea acts on a sluggish liver.

8. HIGHLY POPULAR LAMB. This reference has sometimes been thought to be irreverent, but Dickens, who was a seriously religious man, uses it—as it is used in the Bible—not as being a direct mention of Our Saviour, but as being a *simile* and a simile only. In a letter written on the morning of the day of his fatal seizure and only a few hours before his death he replied to a correspondent : " It would be quite inconceivable to me . . . that any reasonable reader could possibly attach a scriptural reference to a passage in a book of mine reproducing a much abused social figure of speech impressed into all sorts of service on all sorts of inappropriate occasions without the faintest connexion of it with its original source . . ."

9. LADY MACBETH WAS HOPELESS. This allusion combines two separate references. It was not Lady Macbeth, but her husband, who said :

" Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand ? No ; this my hand will rather
The multitudinous sea incarnadine."

Act II, Sc. 1.

Then, in the sleep-walking scene, Lady Macbeth exclaims :

" All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand." Act V, Sc. 1.

10. VESPER SERVICE. See Chap. I, Note 3.

11. WISDOM OF LOVE. An instance of Dickens's knowledge of human motives, and his genius in presenting a profound truth in attractive form.

(*To be continued*)

Continued from page 206

correction makes to our knowledge of the life and character of Dickens. There are several statements in the book which will not be acceptable to admirers of Dickens. Take this, " Compare the majesty of the picture of life on the Mississippi drawn in the pages of Huckleberry Finn with the cramped and uninspired picture given by Dickens. It is the work of a peevish cockney travelling without his breakfast." The last sentence is vivid, but very questionable, and much more so is this : " Yet *The Haunted Man* is but little read to-day. Many lovers of Dickens are probably unaware of its existence." This is ridiculous ; such a reader should be placed among those curious, fictitous creatures loved by Leacock—like the Ahkoond of Swat.

We must, however, thank him for reminding us of the almost forgotten *Our French Watering Place*, with a description of Monsieur Loyal " drawn in two pages with the touch of genius."

We cannot do better than close with two passages, one from the first page, the truth of which will be recognised by all, and the closing words of the book, a magnificent prophecy. Here is the sentence : " And of all the people who have thus read Dickens hardly any have read for an ulterior purpose and with an artificial aim. Other writers are read as a task, are read for self-improvement, for the pedantry and for the vainglory of scholarship. Not so Charles Dickens. His books from first to last have been read for their own sake. The written word has of itself called forth that laughter that lay among the lines, and for its own sake the tears that have fallen upon the page." This is excellent. And now for the prophecy with which the book closes : " In due time it will be known that the works of Charles Dickens represent the highest reach of the world's imaginative literature. This at its lowest is a poor thing, a tale told by an idiot. At its highest—the world's supreme achievement in art."

LEACOCK ON DICKENS

A CANADIAN'S VIEW

By J. H. McNULTY

THE death of Stephen Leacock removes one who added much to the gaiety of the world. He possessed qualities rarely found in one person, for he was a professor of Economics at the McGill University and a humorist to the world. What his lectures on Economics can have been like it is difficult for us to imagine, but English readers did have a chance of hearing him lecture some years ago on humorous subjects, and those who heard him are not likely to forget the experience. You might for a few moments think that what was being said was just silly and refuse to be amused, and then something gave way, and laughter became irresistible and continuous. Leacock enjoyed himself almost as much as the audience.

He had a great admiration for Dickens, whose works are a frequently recurring theme in his books. He answered those who held that the great novelist's characters were not true to life by describing a group of men who were unanimous in holding that Dickens's characters were unreal, and then showing by some curious little habit of speech or action that they were just the people Dickens loved to introduce into his novels.

Another delightful fancy was "The Dry Pickwick," where teetotal Pickwickians appear as a disagreeable, ill-tempered crowd of unpleasant people; all the humour and geniality had disappeared. Now it is extremely likely that if the hard-drinking Pickwickians were suddenly deprived of their liquor they would degenerate into the disagreeable, disgruntled persons described by Leacock, but a teetotaller may be a pleasant and good-natured person. Members of the Dickens Fellowship know this well, because the late S. J. Rust was our "Dry Pickwick" and was well known for his kindness, good humour and geniality.

Leacock had a deep appreciation for the works of Dickens and said many excellent things about them, but at times he irritates all admirers of the great novelist by making statements bound to call forth opposition, statements which are very questionable and contrary to our experience. Much of this may be due to the fact that Leacock gives us a Canadian view, not an English one. but this adds piquancy to his criticism and keeps the reader wide-awake and expectant.

In his book called "Humour," Leacock has a chapter entitled "Technique of the Greater Humorists—Charles Dickens and Mark Twain." This will antagonise many people, for no English reader will admit these two writers to be in the same class. There was a time some fifty years ago when American humour was at the zenith of its popularity, when nearly everyone read some of Mark Twain's books; to-day hardly anyone reads them. Leacock continues "The two Greatest Humorists of all Times. Their Merits and their Defects. Their Contrasted Fields and Methods—Technique of their Work—Their Highest Reach obtains the Supreme Goal." All this will strike an English reader as a great exaggeration of the merits of Mark Twain.

We regard Dickens as a superb novelist, a humorist of the highest rank, and one of the greatest, if not the greatest, creator of character the world has ever seen. Whatever Twain was, he was not that; of course he was much more than a mere funny man, though it is as such that he is chiefly remembered on this side of the Atlantic. Although there is much of interest in the chapter there is the extraordinary statement "the books of Dickens and Mark Twain are more widely read than anything else in fiction." This was not true of

England in 1935, when Leacock's book was published, and it certainly is not true to-day, not true, that is, of the American author.

Leacock's book, "Humour and Humanity," has many passages on Dickens, and is full of good things. Take, for example, a passage reminiscent of a happy past not untouched with the sadness of nostalgia. "As we pass into the nineteenth century we seem to move from sun-flecked shadow into the open sun. For the modern world it is high noon when the century is well in, and with Charles Dickens the sun is at its very zenith. With the great humour of the nineteenth century, with Mr. Pickwick, with Huckleberry Finn, with Tartarin, we find ourselves in our world. We are still in its sunshine. But whether it is lessening we cannot tell."

Speaking of portmanteau words invented by Lewis Carroll, he points out that Dickens either consciously or unconsciously anticipated him, "Thus Vholes, the name of the rascally lawyer, if you like is *vampire* and *ghoul* but only because it had to be: what is a Gamp—is it *gruesome* and *damp*?"

Every reader has noticed the changes that take place in *The Pickwick Papers;* the idea "of a Nimrod Club the members of which were to go out shooting, fishing, and so forth, and getting themselves into difficulty by their lack of dexterity" was altered to something different. Leacock points out that though blunder and discomforture play a part in the book, they soon cease to be "the main element. It is the difference between a horn of brandy, and brandy with Christmas pudding." This could not be better expressed. In *Pickwick* Dickens did a dangerous thing; he made fun of the national game and described a match of which no one can make head or tail, but as Leacock says, "the more we love cricket the more entranced we sit to watch the bowling of a Luffey and the batting of a Podder. The description of the two cricketers, one of whom looked like half a roll of flannel and the other one like the other half is unsurpassed, in the technique of humorous writing. Yet because the picture is true it pleases cricketers; Dickens was trying to catch the atmosphere of cricket and the atmosphere caught him. Set alongside such a scene its winter counterpart, round the great fires of Dingley Dell at Christmas! No one ever did this like Dickens. Shakespeare might talk of 'this royal throne of kings, this sceptr'd isle . . . this England.' Dickens just lighted up the fires of Dingley Dell at Christmas, got Sam Weller drinking ale and Wardle pulling corks, and there was England itself."

In 1933 was published "Charles Dickens, His Life and Works." It was inevitable that Leacock should write such a book, though the reader may well ask is there room for a new life of Dickens? Yet we may be glad to have Leacock's, for he sees things from a different angle. There are inaccuracies in the book and these were dealt with in *The Dickensian* a short while after publication. After this it is only fair to mention Leacock's own discovery and correction of a mistake of Forster's, to whom he paid a generous and well-deserved tribute. "In John Forster's account of Dickens's visit to Montreal there occurs one of the few out-and-out errors to be found in that magnificent work. Misled, no doubt, by Dickens's handwriting in the letters he received, he says that Dickens and his wife stayed at Peasco's Hotel. This is incorrect. Recent researches personally conducted in front of the hotel (still standing in St. Paul Street) show that the name (still legible) is Rasco's Hotel. All research workers in the history of our literature will find in this correction of a standing error a distinct contribution to our knowledge of the life and character of Dickens, and an ample justification of the present volume." Really if this were everything of value the book contained the present volume would not be justified, and it is hard to see what contribution the

(*Continued on page* 204)

RAMBLING ABOUT "BLEAK HOUSE" WITH A FRENCH-SPEAKING CANADIAN

By Mgr. EMILE CHARTIER, M.A., L.Litt., LL.D., Ph.D.

(*Continued from page* 125)

BUT, on the way and to contrast with the peaceful atmosphere of Bleak House, the writer accumulates tremendous events that make a hell of Chesney Wold. In spite of her occasional misbehaviour with Captain Hawdon, Lady Dedlock is a good-hearted person. In proof, she frees her own maid Rosa and allows the handsome girl to be married to Watt Rouncewell, the ironmaster's son and her housekeeper's grandson. Yet, since she was untrue to the laws of nature, her mistake bequeathes dreadful misfortunes to the Dedlocks. Mlle Hortense, the lady's maid, has become aware of the shocking secret. On the other side, Lord Dedlock's attorney, Mr. Tulkinghorn, has discovered it also by means of Guppy, the lawyer's clerk. Has Hortense, the most wretched creature of the lot, ever been offended by the attorney ? Is she mad at the assiduous court paid by him to Chesney Wold ? Or rather, is she angry at her mistress for the kindness Lady Dedlock bestows upon Esther ? Howbeit, she has decided to get rid of the old attorney by murdering him. But, to prevent being detected, she takes such dispositions as to have the police suspect Lady Dedlock to be the guilty person.

The murder brings in Inspector Bucket. Dickens has endowed this one character with all the skill, with all the devotion to their task, that have always been known as the distinctive marks of all police agents in London. As he is most wise, the Inspector uses various proceedings according to the variety of classes he deals with. He simply frightens Jo, the wandering boy, and acts in a companion-like manner towards George, the trooper ; but he shows himself most severe and even brutal towards Hortense. The reason is that, below the series of denunciations against Lady Dedlock, the Inspector has easily read the name of the true writer. His arresting George is a fake to avert suspicion upon his inquiry, while he makes clearer every day the guiltiness of the actual murderer, Mlle Hortense.

Just as he is sagacious, Bucket is full of pity. True it is that he takes all pains to find out Gridley, but, when at last he detects the Man from Shropshire on a death-bed under George's roof, how kind are his words to the poor Chancery litigant ! After learning that Lady Dedlock has fled, he willingly goes into every trouble to discover her hiding place. He takes her child with him and runs a whole night and day to reach her before she puts an end to her dreadful life. Unfortunately for Esther, nature's law, when offended, must be revenged ; it does not depend upon Bucket if he finds only a corpse lying at the gateway where poor Jo previously followed the burial of his friend Nemo, alias Captain Hawdon.

Around these main features others may be seen revolving behind the transparent curtains of Chesney Wold. The presence of Rosa calls in Mr. Rouncewell. The ironmaster is a specimen of those hardy industrial captains who have fostered the economic prosperity of England. In Mr. Boythorn are personated those who cannot admit that the nobleness of a title allows the bearer to overlook the laws of assistance towards his neighbours and the poor, or to claim rights that are not his. Mrs. Rouncewell typifies the housekeepers who, rather than maids, become real companions to their mistress and acquire such intimacy with the whole family as to be looked at as one of its members.

The centre of this group is Sir Leicester Dedlock. He has a hobby ; he prides himself in his noble descent and expects all people to bow to him. His social use is to provide for the living and lodging of all the Dedlock cousins, specially of that haughty and worthless Volumnia. His house is the meeting-place of what Dickens calls ironically " the fashionable intelligence." All these join in the one thought that their country is politically shipwrecked, and they only differ as to the authors of her slumbering. Some reverse it into one group, that of Coodle, Doodle, Foodle and Goodle, Hoodle, Joodle and Loodle, Moodle, Noodle and Quoodle, while others consider another group to be responsible for it, that of Cuffy, Duffy, Fuffy and Guffy, Huffy, Juffy and Kuffy, Luffy, Muffy and Puffy ! As such mean contests go on among them, Sir Leicester is quite busy with curing his rheumatism. All would be well, were it not for his discovery of Lady Dedlock's misbehaviour. From that moment his happiness is shaken to the roots. He, a landlord, has overlooked his duty to his country, and he not even is aware of having wronged her. But what ! Lady Dedlock has been unfaithful towards *him*. Here is the shame, and it is such a blow to him that, although he forgives her in the end, he will die from the grief it bears unto his broken heart.

After a long walk on the side-roads, after meeting there people of all description, may be we have come at last to the portal of Bleak House. What then is Bleak House ?

If I am not mistaken, Dickens's idea was to picture, in this intricate novel, high life in the English countryside. Well, had he described only Chesney Wold and its inmates, the painting might have been true to the original, it would yet have been partial. By joining Bleak House in the same frame, he achieved his task. For then we perceive clearly that, if some of the landlords, noblemen and squires in his times, were selfish enough to care for themselves only, and lost time in talking over vain politics, others forgot themselves in behalf of their fellow-countrymen and indulged in absolute social devotedness to the poor classes. Another aim of his, Dickens reaches by the way. His book shows that kindness towards the victims of wrong social conditions was not then practised by those only whose duty it was to concur in the betterment of society. Humble beings, deprived of money, but rich with compassion, bestowed upon the crushed the beguilement of their charity and their smile.

True it is that the sun shines over Bleak House through dark clouds. The sorrows of Chesney Wold right near seem to bear heavy on the Jarndyce property and often to handicap its owners in their endeavour to afford happiness to others. Well, the same happens in actual life ; happiness is neither constant nor universal, but mixed with mishaps and misfortunes. It is the lot of social workers to compensate, by the gifts of the wealthy, for the needs of those who starve. Likewise, Bleak House has its intimate life troubled by a whole battalion of black crows, I mean, by law-stationers such as Snagsby, law-writers as Hawdon, lawyers' clerks as Guppy, and moreover by attorneys such as Kenge and Carboy, Vholes and the mysterious Tulkinghorn. But society will require such champions of justice as long as it will bear within itself those two foes : the ones, who strive to conquer what they do not hold and are often not entitled to hold ; and those who strenuously endeavour to save what belongs to them and what they justly believe having the right to preserve. And it is again the share of social workers to prevent lawyers from depriving the poor widow of her capital while apparently supporting the orphans' interest.

That mankind may boast of champions of such a high standard there is no clearer proof than the inhabitants of Bleak House.

Here is John Jarndyce. Although he is well satisfied with his share

of the estate, he might obtain a greater portion of it ; but, to claim it would be casting a new bite in the jaws of the Moloch. Therefore, in place of having law interfere with his fortune, he makes his mind up to keep away from Courts. He devotes all his cares upon Ada Clare and Esther Summerson, sparing no delicate attention so as every day to increase their common happiness. Richard Carstone, the husband of Ada, becomes angry with Jarndyce and even gives way to his madness in the wildest terms ; Jarndyce only pities his cousin and secretly helps the poor law-suitor to live and to eat. His fatherly cares towards Esther have turned into a deep love for the ward. But he no sooner perceives Allan's eye resting upon her than he immediately crushes the only dream which ever haunted his old heart. The intended " little mistress of Bleak House " will become, by his generous will, not only the wife of Allan, but the heir of the estate. Yet his love was unselfish ; for the fact of Esther having lost her charms through her awful disease appears to him only one more reason to take her into partnership. Yet also, his love was most generous ; for, on account of his wealth, he might have been most content even without her. But it is the very essential trait of his character to provide for others' happiness. Such is the representative of the wealthy whom Dickens, in his novel, contrasts with the haughty and selfish Sir Leicester Dedlock.

He proceeds in no different manner when describing the lower classes. Compared with the useless busy-bee Mrs. Jellyby, how helpful Esther Summerson is shown to be ! Only a mother's heart can thus widely open itself to all. She looks upon Jo, the wandering-boy, and desperately endeavours to raise his sinking little body. She bows down upon Charley and that twelve-years-old mother to three little brothers learns from Esther both child-care and housekeeping. When Jenny cries for her baby who has just fallen dead on her bosom, she beguiles her as a sister would ; and she comforts both George in the jail and Richard in his tent. Caddy's quietness, before and after her marriage to Prince, largely depends upon her. Her unworthy mother, Lady Dedlock, also benefits by her childlike love during her painful life. And, when she has escaped from Chesney Wold, while she runs to the graveyard where lies Captain Hawdon, Esther avoids no efforts to find and bring her back. Still, nothing in her captivating story calls for greater admiration, besides her confidence in her Guardian, than her behaviour towards Ada. Esther deeply feels the fact of having been kept apart from Ada's secret marriage to Richard. Yet she unceasingly wanders about Ada's house, she unceasingly calls on her and thus allows some sunshine to pour through the lonely roof. Her devotion comes to an end only when Richard has bid his adieu with a smile to this world of sorrows. Thus Esther typifies, in Dickens's novel, that tenderness to mankind which the lowly take up as their duty, when higher classes neglect to perform that first of their social tasks.

Before closing, it is my earnest hope not to have wronged the master of English novel-writing by interpreting as I have done the aim he had in sight when writing *Bleak House*.

What led me to such an interpretation is the striking likeness between Dickens's books and the novels published by his contemporaries on the other side of the English Channel. As *Bleak House*, they all appear to echo the social ideas of the times.

The novel dates back to 1850. In 1846 and 1847 Dickens had spent over one year in France and Paris. He had then been closely connected with both Alexandre Dumas and Victor Hugo. Observe now that, while Dumas's "Count of Monte Cristo" and "The Three Musketeers" had come out of print between 1840 and 1844, Hugo's " Les Misérables,"

which was handed to the press in 1862 only, was already completely drafted in 1848, as is shown by the original manuscript. Hugo himself has pointed out his views in these terms of his foreword: "As long as, on account of laws and ideas, there will be a social damnation that artificially lights up a hell amidst the highest civilisation and couples with human fatalism a destiny that is divine; until the three problems of this age have been settled, I mean the degradation of men by machines, the lowering of woman through hunger and the choking of children by darkness; as long as social suffocation will be made possible, in certain districts; in other words and from a broader point of view, as long as ignorance and suffering will last on earth—books of this kind may not be without their use."

If I have succeeded in making myself understood, you will certainly wonder at the striking likeness between Hugo's design and Dickens's achievement. We are even allowed to think that the latter's intercourse with the French novelist and poet had some influence on him, at least for the choice of his topic.

But, in the way they expand their common subject, the discrimination is noticeable at first sight. Hugo's plot is so constructed that all virtues appear to have fled forever from amongst the "fashionable intelligence." On the contrary, according to Dickens's views, if some of the nobility do not fulfil their social duty, most of the wealthy show themselves as generous as society expects them to be, on account of their welfare and their higher education. In like manner, Dickens spurns at the easy-to-shake paradox that the outlaws have inherited the virtues despised by the nobility. He purposely contrasts useless busy-bees like Mrs. Jellyby and indifferent landlords like Sir Leicester Dedlock with true social benefactors such as John Jarndyce and the discreet but earnest Esther Summerson.

IV.

To sum up, Hugo indulges not in morals, but in irony and satire against the wealthy and the noble; Dickens is eager to promote the betterment of social conditions; with him, if the sufferings of the poor are vividly depicted, it is not for the show. There is no danger for Dickens's descriptions to stimulate against each other the outlaws and the happy; they rather invite the latter to bend, as good Samaritans, upon the wounds of the former. Might the same be said of Hugo? One may fear not.

So *Bleak House* is an important contribution to the knowledge of English life as it was led in Dickens's days. It is a most powerful plea for a change to the better in social relations at all times and in any country. It is a book to which all those should refer who care to increase the happiness of our own society. Where conditions are scarcely different, the same medicine is apt to cure the same diseases.

WANTED. Copies of *The Dickensian*, Nos. 261 and 265 for binding. If any reader has a copy or copies of these issues to spare, we should be glad to hear from him. Payment will gladly be made if necessary.

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP ANNUAL CONFERENCE

THE Annual Conference of The Dickens Fellowship, the fifth during the present war, was held in London at The Friends House, Euston Road, on 1st July at the height of the flying-bomb raids, notwithstanding which the attendance numbered two-thirds of the normal wartime Conference figures, although there were unavoidably many notable absentees. Among these was Mr. Leo Mason, of Blackburn, whose chairmanship of each Conference since the outbreak of the war has been a very noteworthy feature of their success. In his absence, Mrs. Newcombe, Hon. Secretary of the St. Pancras Branch, took the chair.

After the Roll of Branches had been called, there followed a Tribute to the late Walter Dexter by Mr. T. W. Hill, at the conclusion of which the meeting was asked to stand in silence for a few moments, in memory of the late Editor.

The Dexter Memorial Fund was then announced, and the aims and objects of the Emergency Committee in launching it were explained. Details will be found on p. 185.

The Report of Council was then read by the Honorary Secretary. It expressed satisfaction that very much more ground had not been lost during the five years of arduous war. Activities had perforce been few, but a very active nucleus had been kept together on which it was confidently hoped a rebuilding might take place when hostilities ceased. Australasian Branches seemed to be recovering from the depression of the days when Japanese threats came very near to their shores, but American Branches showed signs that they were now feeling the rigours of war much more severely; they were, however, stoutly maintaining their own. Canada again provided one of the big news items of the year. Funds for the assistance of war-afflicted children continued to flow in unsolicited. Among the major donations, Vancouver has, to date, contributed £220, and the Toronto Branch and its Boz Club, £190. These funds are distributed mainly by the Honorary Secretaries of Branches in the war-damaged cities up and down the country. In addition, Vancouver has sent large quantities of clothing, and Philadelphia, Christmas parcels for the children. The most grateful thanks of the Fellowship to these Branches was again expressed.

More than one thousand woollen comforts for the Forces have been knitted by Headquarters members alone, and very many Branches were doing similar work.

The Dickensian has continued its useful course, its standard wonderfully upheld by the late Editor in spite of all difficulties. Gladly and gratefully the acknowledgement was made. He has left the Fellowship a splendid institution in its journal. The imprint of his personality upon it would be sadly missed.

Again the Honorary Auditors, owing to wartime difficulties, had been unable to audit the accounts in time for Conference. They will ultimately appear in these pages. In the meantime, in the regrettable but unavoidable absence of the Honorary Treasurer, draft balance sheets were presented with his comments upon them. The financial position presents much cause for satisfaction, due to most careful husbanding of resources. This process must continue until the crisis passes. The Dickens House has paid its way owing to the continued support of The Friends of the Dickens House, but receipts from that source had fallen slightly. New Friends are needed, their only responsibility being an annual subscription of their own choosing.

The Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer, Mr. Leslie C. Staples and Mr. T. W. Hill, were re-elected. Then following the election of the Honorary Editor of *The Dickensian*. The appointment made by the Emergency Committee, Mr. Leslie C. Staples, was explained and proposed by Mrs. Jane Bacon, the newly-appointed member of that committee, and seconded by Mr. Frank Staff. After the motion was carried, Mr. Staples thanked the meeting for the confidence it placed in him, and expressed his sensibility of the great honour that had been accorded him and his gratification at his recollection of Mr. Dexter's oft and recently expressed wish that he should one day succeed him. It was then proposed from the hall that a

vote of thanks for their labours be passed to the officers of the society, which was carried with acclamation.

The Vice-Presidents were re-elected *en bloc*, no vacancies being filled, in accordance with the Emergency Committee's policy of relegating such matters until after the war. The Honorary Auditors were re-elected, and the Honorary Secretary instructed to convey to Messrs. Whinney, Smith and Whinney the deep appreciation of Conference of their long continued and generous offices.

The Book for study during 1945-46 was decided, *Little Dorrit* being selected to follow *Bleak House*, which is the book for the coming season, as decided by the 1943 Conference.

The proceedings concluded with a vote of thanks to the Chairman, proposed by Mr. George F. Young; the company then adjourned for tea, which was served in the Dining Room at Euston Station.

L. C. S.

MR. PICKWICK LOOKS AT LONDON

[Mr. Pickwick has sent us his impressions of the Metropolis in wartime through the kind offices of Mr. J. Greaves of the Balham Branch.—EDITOR.]

It occurs to me that members of the Dickens Fellowship might like me to write a few words giving my impressions of London as it is to-day. In the small space at my disposal I can never hope to tell you all I feel, or to convey my wonderment at things that you now take for granted; your motor buses, your taxi cabs, your buildings, your tube railways, and most remarkable—your moving staircases. Astonishing, very, as that rascal Jingle would remark.

I find you in the thick of a great fight; not that I blame you for that. I always prided myself on being a man of peace, but as you will have gathered from my writing in the posthumous Papers of the Club bearing my name, which I venture to hope you have done me the honour of reading, I could never stand an injustice. You will remember how I so far forgot myself as to fight that very unreasonable cabman who attacked me for no reason whatever.

Strange to say, I find little change in some things, in spite of your astounding inventions, a few of which I mentioned at the beginning of my writing. You still have your intrigues and love affairs; you still go shooting pests, though somewhat larger ones than the rooks my friend Mr. Winkle made such a futile attempt to bring down; your cabmen are still as unreasonable when the correct fare is tendered, although now they say in the expression of their countenance more than my particular cabman, mentioned previously, did with his over ready fists; you still skate on ice, very thin ice at times if I may say so.

What, then, apart from material things, impresses me most in your wonderful city and in fact in your still wonderful country? I find as I said you are engaged in a grim fight. I find heartrending scenes of destruction and suffering, destruction greater than I ever considered possible, and suffering deeper than I ever imagined human beings could endure. Through it all, like the little flower growing in the ugly rubbish heap, I find an almost unbelievable spirit of friendliness and a sincere desire to help each other in adversity. That, my friends, is what impresses me most of all, and prevents me from despairing of humanity to-day. What better words can I use in conclusion then, than those I wrote in my Papers—"There are dark shadows on the Earth, but its lights are stronger in the contrast."

SAMUEL PICKWICK.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Drawn by] [*Ed. F. Payne*

THE *CAROL* IN THE TOY THEATRE

I am happy to find that quite a number of Dickensians are, or have at some time been, devotees of the Juvenile Drama, and as several have been interested in the fact that the *Carol* (cut) has been recorded, may I add to my note of the three recordings (No. 270, p. 88) the fact that there is a fourth ? Besides the old Columbia set, made by our friend Bransby Williams, and the Ronald Colman and Basil Rathbone sets, there is another, made (like the two recent ones, in America) by Ernest Chappel, Eustace Wyatt and Co. ; four records, with incidental music, issued by the Victor Co. ; Set V.—G.29, price three dollars, sixty-seven cents. So far as I know, only the old Columbia set and the Colman have been on sale over here—the latter by the Decca Co.

There was a slip in one of the figures identifying the Rathbone set, by the way : it is CM. 521, not 527.

It would be a great pleasure to hear of anyone else who has performed a Dickens play on the toy theatre stage ; and, indeed, from anyone who still delves in that (as regards its history) somewhat dark and secret world. Much remains to be clarified as to where the plays came from. Like the bulk of those made from Dickens's books, they were shamelessly stolen ; I suppose, at " penny plain, twopence coloured " prices, the vendors would plaintively ask how they were to be expected to pay royalties !

Brighton. W. R. Anderson.

THE FASCINATION OF THE SEA

Mr. Ronald E. Rigg's charming article, " The Fascination of the Sea," which appeared in the last number of *The Dickensian*, brings out another side of Dickens the man and novelist.

Not that we did not know of Dickens's love of the sea, broadly. But Mr. Rigg, himself perhaps a great sea lover, has caught the poetic as well as the homely passion for it which Dickens had and illustrates his theme with apt and extensive extracts.

His data on Dickens's own travels is interesting too, and here I would like to add a note. Mr. Rigg supposes the first time Dickens saw the open sea to have been when he was a reporter. I have no opportunity for verification just now, but if my memory serves there *is* no record of Dickens going to the sea in the Chatham days or later London up to his reporting days.

Still, I cannot help feeling that in the palmy days of Chatham, at least, trips to the coast of Kent might have been made. It is a moot point, of course—the main road led to Dover, a long way off. Yet a subtle atmosphere of the sea enters so much into tales of those parts, as if " remembered " a long way back. For instance, that time when Pip, out on the Marshes in the failing light, thought of it as crouching far out in its angry lair.

And I do think that when he was earning his first money as a lawyer's clerk Dickens would have taken one of the popular trips down the Thames to the sea such as Boz later describes.

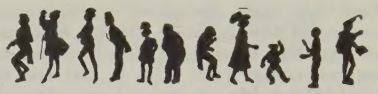
What is certain is that both at Chatham and later when, still a boy, he often visited his godfather, Christopher Huffam, at Limehouse, the salt of the sea entered his bones and its language fired his imagination through the boat builders, sailors and master mariners with whom he associated. There is a quality in the portrayal not only of the sea itself, but of those who serve and go down to it, which goes far deeper than, say, that used for the midwives'

and coachmen's mannerisms, great as they are. In all his nautical matter there is an elusive something which only early familiarity and passionate love could express.

But the coachmen remind me too, how they and their travels appealed to him, all travel in fact. Was it all the urge of the born Voyageur ? Did his own restless energy find at once impulse and solace in the ever-changing sea. It seems certain, as Mr. Rigg suggests, that visions of that far-off Shore to which all drift at last were often an inspiration and a comfort to him as he gazed across the sea. Even inland waters called up such visions, as he shows in the incomparable passage describing his feelings when gazing into Niagara Falls, told in *American Notes*.

Whatever the spell was he passed the fascination on, and Mr. Rigg does us a great service in recalling so much of it.

Kew. GWEN MAJOR.



DICKENSIANA

The death of Walter Dexter. " The Times," " Daily Telegraph," " Daily Express," " Daily Mirror," " Evening News," " City Press," " News of the World," " Times Literary Supplement," " Palmers Green Gazette," " Woodgreen Weekly Herald," " Marylebone Chronicle," " Chatham News," " St. Pancras Chronicle," " Eastern Daily Press," " Scotsman," " Coventry Evening Telegraph," " Shrewsbury Chronicle," " Bath Chronicle and Herald," " British Weekly."

" Playbills of the Crummleses," by M. Willson Disher. " Times Literary Supplement," May 6th, 27th.

" Peggotty's Hut." " Radio Times," May 12th.

" Books that ' Mean England ' to Americans," by Beatrice Warde." John o' London's Weekly," May 19th.

" Dickens on Holiday," by Guy P. J. Lestrange. " Norwich Mercury," May 20th.

" Within and Without." " Yorkshire Evening Post," May 24th.

" Mrs. Bardell." " Paisley Daily Press," July 7th.

" Portrait of Charles Dickens ? " " Country Life," July 28th.

DICKENS FELLOWSHIP BRANCH OFFICERS

The thanks of members are due to the following Honorary Secretaries, whose retirement is announced :

Mrs. Hays, Blackpool ; Mr. Milton Howard, Winnipeg.

Congratulations are offered to their successors :

Mrs. S. Shaw, Blackpool ; Mr. Fred Anderson, Winnipeg.

OBITUARY

We deeply regret to announce the passing of :

Mr. G. B. Burgin ...	...	*Vice-President.*
Mr. Walter Dexter	...	*Vice-President and Hon. Editor of " The Dickensian."*
Mrs. Flynn... ...	...	*Headquarters (by enemy action).*
Miss Mary E. Harper	...	*Liverpool and Blackpool Branches.*
Mr. Philip Hunt ...	...	*Los Angeles Branch.*
Sir John Martin-Harvey ...		*Vice-President.*
Mrs. Peebles ...	...	*Headquarters.*
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Mr. John P. Rapsey	...	*Headquarters.*

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A PORTRAIT OF CHARLES DICKENS (?)

"Country Life" published, on July 28th, a reproduction of a very attractive water-colour drawing of a schoolboy which has been alleged to be a contemporary portrait of Dickens at the age of fourteen. Although possibly of high artistic merit, we share the strong doubts of the present owner that the sitter was Dickens.

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Sidney, in 1854, dedicated to Dickens his "Gallops and Gossips in the Bush of Australia."

THE ORIGINAL AUTOGRAPH MANUSCRIPT of the EPITAPH he composed for the gravestone of Mrs. KATHERINE THOMSON (grandmother of Mrs. Charles Dickens), in all 36 lines, accompanied by an Original Autograph Letter from Dickens addressed to George Thomson, her husband, dated November 26th, 1841.

AUTOGRAPH LETTER TO GEORGE DOLBY written on "All the Year Round" paper, dated December 12th, 1866, mounted with the original stamped envelope, together with an Introduction by Cumberland Clark, and bound in levant morocco.

In this letter Dickens refers to the success of "Mugby Junction", the extra Christmas Number for 1866. George Dolby was Dickens's business manager on his third Reading Tour, 1866.

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